

**Identities, ideologies and practices of English language teachers
in one school in the United Arab Emirates**

Jody Lynn Hendricks

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Supervisor: Dr Taryn Bernard

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DECLARATION

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Jody Lynn Hendricks

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ABSTRACT

According to Siemund, Al-Issa and Leimgruber (2020:1), English “occupies a special role” in the “multilingual texture” of the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The fact that it is the medium of instruction in most public and private schools and tertiary institutions in the UAE is meant to offer learners an advantage, nationally and internationally. At the same time, though, English is perceived as threatening the local language, Arabic, and its associated culture (Hopkyns 2014:1, 3; Al-Issa 2017:4). Against this complex background, the present study examines the identities and ideologies of six English language teachers and how these impact their pedagogical practices in English language classrooms in a cycle one school in Al Ain, in the UAE. A qualitative research design was used (i) to investigate the teachers’ ideologies of English, (ii) to investigate their actual pedagogical practices, and (iii) to determine the relationship between their language ideologies, on the one hand, and their actual pedagogical practices, on the other. A thematic analysis of data collected by means of semi-structured interviews and classroom observations, showed a correlation between the teachers’ ideologies and their pedagogical practices. The study’s findings suggest that English-speaking teachers of English in the UAE have positive attitudes towards the learners’ mother tongue and its culture, and towards promoting the target language, English, and helping learners to acquire communicative competence in this global language.

Keywords: English language teachers, English language learners, English language classrooms, identity, language ideology, perception

OPSOMMING

Volgens Siemund, Al-Issa en Leimgruber (2020:1), vervul Engels 'n spesiale rol in die veeltalige “tekstuur” van die Verenigde Arabiese Emirate (VAE). Die feit dat dit die onderrigtaal is in die meeste van die publieke en private skole, sowel as tersiêre inrigtings in die VAE, behoort aan leerders 'n voordeel te bied, beide nasionaal en internasionaal. Terselfdertyd word Engels beskou as 'n bedreiging vir die plaaslike taal, Arabies, en die verwante kultuur (Hopkins 2014:1, 3; Al-Issa 2017:4). Teen hierdie komplekse agtergrond, ondersoek die huidige studie die identiteite en ideologieë van ses Engelse taalonderwysers, en die impak wat dit het op hulle onderrigpraktyke in Engelse taalklaskamers in 'n siklus-een skool in Al Ain, in die VAE. 'n Kwalitatiewe navorsingsontwerp is gebruik (i) om die onderwysers se ideologieë van Engels te ondersoek, (ii) om hulle werklike onderrigpraktyke te ondersoek, en (iii) om vas te stel wat die verhouding is tussen hulle taalideologieë, aan die een kant, en hulle werklike onderrigpraktyke, aan die ander kant. 'n Tematiese analise van data wat ingesamel is deur middel van semi-gestruktureerde onderhoude en klaskamerwaarnemings, het 'n korrelasie gewys tussen onderwysers se taalideologieë en hulle pedagogiese praktyke. Die studie se bevindinge dui daarop dat Engelssprekende onderwysers van Engels in die VAE positiewe houdings het teenoor die leerders se moedertaal en die verwante kultuur, en teenoor die bevordering van die teikentaal, Engels, en dat hulle 'n begeerte het om die leerders te help om kommunikatiewe vaardigheid in hierdie wêreldtaal te bemeester.

Sleutelwoorde: Engelse taalonderwysers, Engelse taalleerders, Engelse taalklaskamers, identiteit, taalideologie, persepsie

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ADEC	Abu Dhabi Education Council
EMT	English-medium teacher
KG	kindergarten
P1 to P6	Participant 1 to 6
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UK	United Kingdom
USA	United States of America

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

1.1 Introduction

According to Siemund, Al-Issa and Leimgruber (2020:1), English “occupies a special role” in the “multilingual texture” of the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The fact that it is the medium of instruction in most public and private schools and tertiary institutions in the UAE is meant to offer learners an advantage, nationally and internationally. At the same time, though, English is perceived as threatening the local language, Arabic, and its associated culture (Hopkins 2014:1, 3; Al-Issa 2017:4). Against this complex background, the study reported in this thesis examines the identities and ideologies of English language teachers and how this impacts their pedagogical practices in English language classrooms in a cycle one school¹ in Al Ain, in the UAE. This chapter provides some background to the study, defines key terms and presents the study’s research questions and hypotheses.

1.2 Background to the study

English is a global language which is influential in many countries and has become one of the most powerful languages, both educationally and socially (Pennycook, 2009:9). Arabic is the only official language in the UAE; however, English plays a significant role in the country, even though it does not have the status of an official language (Diallo, 2014:2). For example, given that expatriates outnumber the local population in the UAE², English is used by a large part of the population because it serves as a lingua franca amongst people from different nationalities, including the Emiratis (Al Allaq, 2007:3).

English has also become a dominant second language in the country and is taught as a subject in both private and public schools, as well as at higher education institutions (Al-Issa and Dahan, 2011:5). In addition, English is implemented as a medium of instruction at many

¹ In the UAE, a cycle one school is for learners in Grades 1 to 4.

² Findlow (2006) indicates that the Emiratis make up 20% of the population and expatriates the other 80%.

educational institutions, from kindergarten (KG) onwards, at primary and secondary schools, and at tertiary institutions (Troudi, 2007:3-6). In these contexts, Arabic-speaking learners receive instruction in all their subjects through the medium of English, and English itself is taught to them at first language level (instead of second or additional language level). Al-Issa and Dahan (2011:6) state that in 2010 the Abu Dhabi Education Council (ADEC) recruited more than 1,000 native English speakers from all over the world to work as teachers in their public schools. Native English-speaking teachers are often recruited from English-speaking countries by the UAE and employed in government institutions, public and private schools, and higher education institutions (Diallo, 2014:2). The decision to use English as a medium of instruction in the UAE is largely due to perceptions of English as an international and global language that can offer learners more economic power across the globe (Al-Issa and Dahan, 2011:3-4).

In the UAE, like elsewhere in the world, there are contrasting perceptions and ideologies surrounding English. Hopkyns (2014:1) points out that, although English is associated with a type of prestige and opportunity, there are also concerns about the potentially negative effects of such a dominant language on local languages, cultures and identities. Some scholars have noted, for example, the concern that English teachers from different countries may introduce their own beliefs, traditions and cultures in the classroom, which may not be aligned with the beliefs, traditions and cultures of the UAE (Al Allaq, 2007:2).

Clark-Gareca and Gui (2018:139-141) state that, even with a structured curriculum in place, the identities and beliefs of English language teachers can influence how they teach English, how their learners learn the language, and what the learners' attitudes are towards the language. Teachers' educational practices and language teaching strategies are thus influenced by their beliefs, identities and cultural backgrounds (Clark-Gareca and Gui, 2018:137, 139). Clark-Gareca and Gui (2018:148-149), for example, found that American English teachers focused more on communicative strategies in the classroom, while Chinese English teachers focused more on practising grammatical structure. A high percentage of American English teachers were also found to strongly believe that learning the English language was linked to learning a new culture (Clark-Gareca and Gui, 2018:148-149). Teachers, of course, also base their teaching on their experience, and might sometimes find it difficult to change their pedagogical practices even if the goal is to ensure more effective language teaching and learning.

1.3 Identity, culture and language ideologies

‘Identity’ is defined as “how a person understands his or her relationship to the world, how that relationship is constructed across time and space, and how the person understands possibilities for the future” (Norton, 2000:5). Identities, therefore, do not remain fixed, but change over time due to personal, social and linguistic factors (Hopkins, 2014:4). In this study, ‘culture’ is defined as a set of values shared by a group of people in a society through their attitudes, beliefs and behaviour, and it is also taken to involve the influence a group of people might have on other members of society (Gao, 2006:59). There are strong relationships between language, culture and identity, as language forms a basic part of culture (Hopkins, 2014:5).

Culture affects language teaching both on the level of language competency, and on the level of language teaching (McKay 2003:4). Recent literature on language teaching highlights the effect of the identity, culture and ideology of teachers on classroom dynamics, teaching and learning. ‘Language ideologies’ are defined as a set of beliefs, attitudes, perceptions and pedagogical practices that characterise an individual’s feelings about a language (Wafa, Fauziati and Hikmat 2016:2; Razfar, 2012:63; Pan and Block, 2011:392). It is clear that teachers draw on their own beliefs from their own cultural and educational backgrounds when teaching (Clark-Gareca and Gui, 2018:139-143). In Clark-Gareca and Gui’s (2018:143) study this was illustrated by the differences between Chinese and American English teachers’ beliefs about curricular and pedagogical practices, as mentioned in the previous section.

Diallo (2014:5) found that Western education models are rooted in critical and rational thinking, and that the preferred teaching approaches in these models are those which allow learners to predict, observe and communicate situations. In contrast, he found that Islamic education models are strongly influenced by Islamic beliefs, values and morals, which results in education which is consistent with the Islamic religious culture and teachings (Diallo, 2014:5). In the UAE, however, the case is less clear, since English is the medium of instruction in most schools, and learners are exposed to their native English teachers’ identities, cultures and ideologies (Al-Issa and Dahan, 2011:7). For this reason, it would be insightful to know how English-speaking teachers’ ideologies of English affect their teaching of English in UAE classrooms.

1.4 Research aims, research questions and hypotheses

English language teaching is an important field within applied linguistics, particularly given the worldwide dominance of English today. Research into this field can be approached in many different ways and from many different perspectives – both quantitative and qualitative – and by focusing on either the learner or the teacher, or both. The study reported in this thesis is qualitative, and its aim is twofold: (i) to investigate English-speaking language teachers' ideologies of English, and (ii) to explore how these ideologies affect their teaching of English in the specific context of the UAE. This aim was addressed by means of three specific research questions:

- (i) What ideologies of English are held by English-speaking teachers of English in the school context of the UAE?
- (ii) What do classroom observations reveal about these teachers' ideologies of English and their pedagogical practices?
- (iii) What is the relationship between the teachers' ideologies of English, on the one hand, and their actual pedagogical practices, on the other?

Given an in-depth review of the relevant literature (see Chapter 2), the following hypotheses were formulated in response to the above-mentioned research questions:

- (i) The teachers will have positive attitudes towards English and will realise its potential value (as a global language) for their Arabic-speaking learners.
- (ii) The teachers' will adopt specific pedagogical practices in order to maximise the effectiveness of their language teaching.
- (iii) The teachers' ideologies of English will be reflected in their pedagogical practices.

1.5 Approach to data collection and analysis

Data for this study was collected from six teachers teaching English to learners from KG to Grade 4 in a cycle one school in Al Ain in the UAE, where the researcher was an English language teacher of three Grade 1 classes at the time of the study. The primary data collection method was a semi-structured interview. The interview was designed to elicit data that would address the research questions presented above, and to enable the researcher to understand the

participants' experiences of teaching English in the UAE, and their perceptions of English as a global language.

In addition, classroom observations were also conducted. The researcher will be directly participating in the same setting to understand the group of people by looking, listening and observing. The researcher will therefore be able to relate to and understand the domain by being a part of it and seeing things in context (Silverman, 2006:68). According to Richards and Farrell (2011:91), classroom observations give the researcher the opportunity to reflect on lessons, and to carefully observe how learners interact with the teacher, and vice versa. During these observations, the researcher placed herself in a strategic place in the classroom and made field notes of what was being observed in the English language classroom. The field notes were guided by the interview questions that were posed to the teachers. In other words, the researcher observed how the teachers' identities and ideologies affected, or were reflected in, their pedagogical practices. The two data sets – the interview data and the observation data – were then analysed by means of thematic analysis.

1.6 Conclusion

This chapter provided an introduction to the study in terms of background, research aim and research questions, and data collection and analysis methodology. The remainder of the thesis is organised as follows: Chapter 2 provides an in-depth review of the relevant literature, pertaining to the concepts that are central to the current study, and Chapter 3 discusses the research methodology. Chapter 4 presents the results of the data analysis, per participant, and Chapter 5 concludes the thesis by discussing the findings of the study in the context of the three specific research questions.

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the literature on the concepts which are central to the study reported in this thesis. Firstly, an overview is presented of the literature on English as a global language in the UAE, and the impact this has on the local Arabic language, culture and identity. Secondly, literature on the relationship between language and culture is discussed, with specific reference to fears of language and culture loss and the challenges faced by teachers whose language and culture differ from those of their learners. Thirdly, the concepts of ‘identities’ and ‘language ideologies’ are discussed, also with reference to how these impact teachers’ pedagogical practices. The chapter concludes with a short discussion of literature on teachers’ perceptions of the English language.

2.2 English as a global language

Crystal (2012:3) explains that a global language is a language that attains an official position in every country. English is the first language of the majority of the population in countries like the United States of America (USA), Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United Kingdom (UK) (Rao, 2019:67). It is also (one of) the official language(s) of 54 countries and is used as a medium of instruction in education sectors all over the world (Rao, 2019:68). Hopkyns (2014:1) notes that it is the only language that is spoken on five of the seven continents. In 2012 already, Crystal (2012:7) noted that English had reached a stage where it was being used by more people than any other language in the world – it was being spoken by a quarter of the world’s population. He added that no other language could match the growth of global English (Crystal, 2012:7). More recently, Rao (2019:66, 68) noted that English has become the “fastest increasing language” in the world, with around 375 million people speaking it as a primary language and more than 750 million people speaking it as a foreign language. This widespread use, is, of course, what makes English an international lingua franca, used in multicultural contexts where speakers of different first languages would otherwise not be able to communicate effectively (Rao, 2019:66; Thao and Tai, 2018:254).

Crystal (2012:7) states, though, that it is not necessarily the number of people who speak a language that determines its status as a global language. Instead, he argues that the essential reason why English is regarded as a global language is the power of its speakers. Along the same lines, Hopkyns (2014:1) argues that the global status of English is increasing because of its importance not only for communication, but also for social, cultural and economic relations.

Rao (2019:73) notes that English plays a pivotal role specifically in the domain of education. This is why many non-English speaking countries started implementing English as a medium of instruction and started employing English-speaking teachers from Western countries (Eken, 2015:63). The UAE is a case in point, as will become clear below.

2.3 English in the UAE

As noted earlier, it is estimated that the UAE population of nine million people is made up of around 20% nationals and 80% expatriates (Al-Issa, 2017:4). Al-Issa and Dahan (2011:4) note that it is “the demographics of the country which are the driving force behind the continual need for English”: even though Arabic is the country’s official language, the high percentage of expatriates creates the need for a common language or lingua franca to enable effective communication between people from different nationalities (cf. also Al-Issa, 2017:4). Pan and Block (2011:393) note that English has become a useful commodity in the UAE, and is being used by the locals in many aspects of their everyday routine, such as going to the shops, school, university and government places (Belhiah and Al-hussien, 2016:346). English has become a prominent second language (Kennetz and Carroll, 2018:167; Hopkyns, 2014:1; Belhiah and Elhami, 2015:4) and has been given a place of prestige within the UAE, both socially and educationally (Al-Issa, 2017:5; Al-Issa and Dahan, 2011:11). As Al-Issa (2017:4) notes, “Arabic is not preserving its once prestigious place; instead, globalization and global English have emerged forcefully in the [UAE] and have put down resilient roots”. This is, of course, happening all over the world, where local languages are negatively impacted and become endangered through the influx of global English (Chang 2011:3).

Given the close relationship between language and culture (see section 2.5 below), English is not only perceived as a threat to the Arabic language but also to the Arabic culture and religion. The language of a country gives the people of the country a sense of belonging, as they express their values, traditions and cultural heritage through their language (Belhiah and

Al-hussien, 2016:343). Thus, it is the language that shapes the individuals of the country, in terms of their character, their beliefs, their values and their identities (Belhiah and Al-hussien, 2016:343).

Attitudes towards English are thus probably varied within the UAE. Crystal (2012:3) argues that if you live in a country where your mother tongue is threatened by English, you may feel resentful towards the language. You may feel that the language undermines your identity, culture, values, morals and sense of belonging (Al-Issa and Dahan, 2011:2). However, Hopkyns (2014:10) notes that, despite the controversy surrounding the impact of English on the local language, culture and identity, there are also positive attitudes from learners towards English. Global English gives learners the platform to converse with people from different nationalities to enhance effective communication in the target language (Hopkyns, 2014:10). This, in turn, leads to the development of relationships between the target language (English), its culture and beliefs, on the one hand, and the Arabic culture, on the other (Hopkyns, 2014:10).

According to Pan and Block (2011:393), English is often described as a gatekeeper to the modernisation of a country for social and economic prestige. There are two ways in which a language can be made a priority in a country: firstly, by implementing it as a medium of communication in the government, media, court of law and education; and, secondly, by making it an official language of the country (Crystal, 2012:4-5). Although Arabic is still the only official language of the UAE, English has steadily been replacing Arabic as the language of teaching and learning. The UAE is striving to have their learners educated in the English language and the country's goal is to guarantee high-quality education to enable the young learners to contribute to the global economy (Alhosani, Singh and Al Nahyan, 2017:843).

2.4 English in education in the UAE

English has become the language of instruction in many educational institutions in the UAE, and plays an important role in the development of the education system (Kennetz and Carroll, 2018:166; Hopkyns, 2014:1; Belhiah and Elhami, 2015:4). The UAE is focusing on establishing an economy that is knowledge-based and for this reason the government implemented English as the language of instruction in most schools (Belhiah and Elhami, 2015:5; Hopkyns, 2014:1). It is used as a first language to teach content subjects (all subjects except Arabic as a language and moral education) at both private and public schools (Al-Issa

and Dahan, 2011:5; Kennetz and Carrol, 2018:180). This is done from KG onwards, throughout cycle one schools (Al-Issa and Dahan, 2011:5). Unsurprisingly, in most cases learners “develop more of a rapport and facility with utilizing [English] in terms of reading and literacy than they do with Arabic” (Al-Issa and Dahan, 2011:13). Daily routines, pedagogical practices and classroom management are introduced and explained in English (Al-Issa and Dahan, 2011:6). Furthermore, in English language classrooms, teachers use English every day and throughout each lesson, which includes classroom management, introduction of lessons, greetings and every day routines (Kim, 2002:132). Higher education institutions in the UAE also teach primarily through the medium of English (Copland, Garton and Burns, 2014:738-739; Diallo, 2014:1)

Al-Issan and Dahan (2011:7) note that in both public and private schools only native English speakers are employed to teach the language. This clear preference for Western-trained English-speaking teachers is illustrated by the fact that the ADEC regularly employs such teachers from Australia, the USA, New Zealand, Canada, the UK and South Africa to teach English in the UAE (Belhiah and Elhami, 2015:4).

UAE parents are sending their children to English language institutions to ensure that they receive a solid foundation in English (Al-Issa and Dahan, 2011:5). Copland et al. (2014:738) note that the reason for introducing English as a medium of instruction in KG already, is the assumption that it is beneficial for learners to start learning a new language at an early age. From the government’s perspective, the reason is probably to create an English-speaking workforce. Parents prefer to have their children attend private English-medium schools to benefit from global English, as well as to give them a head start for further studies at higher education institutions (Hopkyns, 2016:89). According to Al-Issa (2017:5), private schools, with their UK- and USA-based curricula, offer higher quality education than public schools.

It is worth noting Belhiah and Elhami’s (2015:3) findings that the current situation in the UAE, where English is the medium of instruction in most educational sectors, is not beneficial for all learners. These researchers found that many learners were struggling to perform academically and to learn subject matter due to their low proficiency in English. One of the problems seems to be that although learners develop acceptable linguistic competence through the years, they still have communicative difficulties (Tran and Dang, 2014:92-93). What these learners lack is communicative competence, which is said to involve both grammatical and

sociolinguistic skills, and which allows learners to understand the target language in social contexts and to respond appropriately in the target language (Cakir, 2006:5).

2.5 Culture and language teaching

Language and culture are two concepts that cannot be separated when teaching a language (Aydemir and Mede, 2014:13; Ahmed and Shah, 2013:150). Hopkyns (2016:93) describes culture as being attached to a place, community and nation, and as the way that people live and their perceptions of life, as adopted by their community. Language is part of a community's culture, their behaviour and the way they think, as well as how they understand themselves (Said, 2011:191; Belhiah and Al-hussien, 2016:343). In the UAE, the English language and culture are linked with prestige and modernisation, while the Arabic language is “seen as the language of cultural authenticity, localism, tradition, emotions and religion” (Belhiah and Al-hussien, 2016:346).

As touched on earlier, this strong relationship between language and culture leads to concerns regarding the effects that global English might have on the Arabic language and its heritage (Al-Issa and Dahan, 2011:3). Belhiah and Al-hussien (2016:354), for example, argue that the Arabic language, identity and culture are at a shortfall due to the “excessive use of English and the influence of Western culture and values”. The relationship between Arabic, the local culture and identity is strained because of the implementation of global English in educational institutions (Al-Issa, 2017:4; Al-Issa and Dahan, 2011:14).

Some scholars believe that Arabic might be at a risk of losing its linguistic prestige (Al-Issa, 2017:4; Al-Issa and Dahan, 2011:4; Al Allaq, 2007:5). Al-Issa (2017:4) claims that the Arabic language and culture are in the process of losing their foundation amongst the Emirati youth. Arabic as an indigenous language and culture might be at a deficit especially because global English is already implemented as language of instruction at an early age (Al Allaq, 2007:4).

Another concern is that Arabic teachers are no longer the primary source of educational values and role models to the learners (Al-Issa, 2017:5), and learners now look up to and respect a Westerner, who is teaching them global English. This is another way in which the mother tongue of the country is being suppressed by global English. Al-Issa (2017:13) predicts that “it will become increasingly difficult to help young Arabs focus on and choose to study Arabic”.

English foreign language teaching “means that teachers and their students may often come from different cultural backgrounds” (Palmer, 2015:77). It is argued that because of the obvious cultural and linguistic differences between English teachers from English-speaking countries and the Arab learners from the UAE, some English language teachers might not possess the necessary skills to deal with cultural differences that arise in the classroom. Although these teachers are fully trained, their teaching might be rendered less effective due to such situations (Palmer, 2015:78; Belhiah and Elhami, 2015:7). However, some teachers master the cultural differences within their classroom and acquire what is known as “intercultural competence”, which will lead to effective teaching and the empowerment of learners (Palmer, 2015:78). If a teacher has acquired intercultural competence, this will equip them to help learners acquire this type of competence as well.

Ahmed and Shah (2003:151) state that for effective teaching and learning in the target language, learners’ attitudes towards the foreign culture are essential, as language is a fundamental part of culture, and language learners are exposed to a new culture (Mazari and Derraz, 2015:351).

Heidari, Ketabi and Zonoobi (2014:3) view the language learning process as leading to learners eventually engaging with people of the target culture, rather than leading to a set of information which the learner is expected to memorise. A common barrier for English language learners from different religious backgrounds involves the foreign culture and society that intertwine with the English language – a language cannot be taught without referring to its culture (Ahmed and Shah, 2013:150).

This notion of learners acquiring a culture rather than consciously learning or being taught about the culture, fits the current situation in the UAE (Heidari et al., 2014:3). English is being encouraged and promoted across all levels of education, which means that throughout their education, learners are exposed to the cultural insights of their Western, English-speaking language teachers (Heidari et al., 2014:4).

Thao and Tai (2018:253) note that English language teachers’ beliefs about teaching and language (their perceptions regarding pedagogical practices) affect learning outcomes. They argue that the close relationship between culture and language also exists within the language classroom context (Tran and Dang, 2014:2; Thao and Tai, 2018:253). Nguyen (2017) notes that to function effectively in multicultural contexts, English language learners need to have an understanding of the target culture and its practices. When a teacher has mastered

intercultural communication, their relationship with the learners can lead to positive cultural experiences and promote effective communication in this multicultural context, minimising misconceptions and misinterpretations (Thao and Tai, 2018:255). Learners can then, in turn, engage in effective intercultural communication inside and outside of the school context, where they frequently come into contact with people from diverse language and cultural backgrounds (Thao and Tai, 2018:255). In this way, English language teaching can lead to intercultural awareness and affect learners' language attitudes (Thao and Tai, 2018:255).

Tran and Seepho (2016) note that the reverse also holds: teachers' knowledge of their English language learners and their culture is equally important for the effective implementation of pedagogical practices. Thao and Tai (2018:254) state that it is also essential for English language teachers to understand their learners' perceptions of the target language and its culture, as these perceptions affect the learners' ability to master the language (with positive attitudes towards English leading to more successful acquisition of the language). The researchers emphasise the fact that cultural awareness contributes to the development of effective communication skills (Thao and Tai, 2018:256). Cakir (2006:5) states that when the goal is for learners to master the target language, the objective is to help them become communicatively competent in the language. This leads to the question of which teaching approach is best suited for teaching English in the UAE, the topic of the next section.

2.6 English as a global language and pedagogical practices

Heidari et al. (2014:7) state that a communicative approach to teaching and learning in the second language is a holistic approach, as it leads to linguistic, discourse, strategic and socio-linguistic competence, allowing learners to go out into the real world and communicate effectively (Heidari et al., 2014:7; Chang, 2011:3).

As part of the communicative approach, it is the English language teacher's responsibility to help learners understand the importance of the role of culture in language learning (Thao and Tai, 2018:254). Furthermore, for effective communicative strategies to be implemented within the classroom environment, teachers should be willing to change their teaching styles and ideologies to accommodate learners from different backgrounds (Chang, 2011:3). Copland et al. (2014:754) also refer to the need for teachers to be able to accommodate learners with different language abilities and levels of competence, and Zein (2017:1)

highlights the importance for English language teachers to have on-going and continuous professional development training.

The implementation of communicative teaching styles can create an interactive teaching and learning environment (Bristol et al., 2019:94). Active learning includes developing learners' listening skills as they listen to their peers as well as their teachers (Bristol et al., 2019:94). Active learning can also be used as a platform to get learners engaged through activities such as games, discussions, peer support and hands-on activities (Bristol et al., 2019:95).

Lightbown and Spada (2013:156-157) state that learners' reading and writing abilities and their ability to use the language effectively when interacting and communicating are equally important. When the objective is for learners to develop a degree of grammatical accuracy and native-like pronunciation in their speech, grammar teaching and error correction are also required (Kvist, 2014:5). Kvist (2014:6) notes that corrective feedback in terms of grammar and sentence structure promotes language learning, as well as the English language learners' confidence, but that it is best not to correct learners' errors immediately.

From a constructivist perspective, the best way learners learn is to engage with the content, as opposed to receiving information passively (Cattaneo, 2017:20). However, English language teachers' own linguistic proficiency can be a deficit when it comes to promoting oral skills amongst English language learners (Su, 2006:268). Therefore, sufficient training regarding pedagogical practices and the effective use of communicative teaching strategies must be implemented to promote and enhance communication in the target language (Su, 2006:268). It is the teacher's responsibility to create an environment where English language learners can feel confident enough to communicate with each other in the target language (Su, 2006:267).

2.7 Identity and language teaching

Teachers' identities have become an interest in research on second language teaching (Morgan and Clarke, 2011:18). Hopkyns (2014:5) states that 'identity' is the way people understand their relationship to the world in terms of their qualities, beliefs or personalities. For the purpose of this study, identity will focus on personal, social and linguistic factors of

the individual within a particular society (Hopkyns, 2014:5), and the focus will also be on teachers' beliefs about themselves and about teaching and learning.

Teachers' identities are linked to how they perceive themselves as teachers and how they maintain their identities within the school setting (Schutz and Lee, 2014:173). Borg and Al-Busaidi (2012:6) refer to teachers' beliefs as "language teacher cognition", noting that this includes the way teachers deliberate, believe and know.

Teachers' identities might be constructed and moulded by the culture of the school, as well as their interaction with the learners, and their teaching experiences (Hopkyns, 2014:4; Larenas, Hernandez and Navarrete, 2015:172). Teachers' beliefs vary in terms of their thought processes, perceptions, personal agendas, pedagogical knowledge, and their own teaching and learning styles and methods (Gabillon, 2012:190-191). Teachers' prior learning contexts and teaching experiences – as learners and as student teachers – are key elements that shape their beliefs as professional teachers (Gabillon, 2012:191). Social factors and socio-political changes influence the ways in which English language teachers' identities are constructed in their school environment and also affect their language ideologies (Morgan and Clarke, 2011:835). Additionally, Varghese et al. (2005:22) mention that in teaching and learning, teachers' identities are shaped and defined by their professional, cultural, individual and political identities, as well as their educational, cultural and social backgrounds (see also Gabillon, 2012:191). The resulting beliefs are, of course, diverse and vary from one teacher to the next (Gabillon, 2012:191).

Razfar (2012:62) notes that teachers' professional identity originates from their beliefs about teaching and learning, and that their beliefs and identities define them. This is why these beliefs and identities are resistant to change. However, Erkmen (2010:22) argues that teachers' beliefs can be reoriented as a result of educational training or input from colleagues. Schutz and Lee (2014:174) state that when learners' behaviour is not in line with teachers' perceptions of teaching and learning, it is possible for the teachers' identities "to be challenged, resulting in potential changes [to] those identities" (Schutz and Lee, 2014:174).

English language teachers' identities influence the way they feel about themselves, their attitudes towards teaching and learning, and their interaction with their learners (Schutz and Lee, 2014:173; Day et al., 2006:602). James-Wilson (2001:29) states that teachers' attitudes towards themselves and towards their learners play a significant role in their teaching outcomes and how effective their teaching is. These identities are said to affect teachers'

teaching and pedagogical practices as they are the foundation of the teachers' attitudes and beliefs about teaching and learning (Pan and Block, 2019:139; Razfar, 2012:62; Clark-Garecca and Gui, 2019:138; Day et al., 2006:602-603). English language teachers' identities determine the way in which their classrooms are managed, how they design the lesson and how it is implemented and achieved (Day et al., 2006:603). This effect of teachers' identities on pedagogical practices and teaching effectiveness can be either positive or negative (Wafa et al., 2016:3).

In addition to English language teachers' beliefs influencing the classroom environment, their beliefs and identities also contribute to learners' attitudes and beliefs, which, in turn, influence the learners' success (Wafa et al., 2016:2). Furthermore, teachers' identities influence their decision making (Gabillon, 2012:192). Teaching and learning is an active process that requires decision making to highlight the needs of the learners (Gabillon, 2012:190). These decisions are often viewed as a reflection of teachers' identities and beliefs within the English language classroom (Gabillon, 2012:190). Morgan and Clarke (2011:835) also note the link between teachers' language identities and their pedagogical interventions.

Diallo (2014:1) mentions that Western-trained teachers teaching in a non-Western educational setting tend to implement their own set of beliefs, identities and pedagogical practices, which may differ from the host country's social, traditional and educational setting. Belhiah and Elhami (2015:4) add that teachers' beliefs do not necessarily include the need to maintain the national identity of the UAE, especially given the fact that the country relies extensively on an expatriate workforce in its education system.

2.8 Language ideologies

'Language ideologies' are defined as a set of beliefs, attitudes, perceptions and pedagogical practices that characterise an individual's feelings about the language(s) used within their social communities (Wafa et al., 2016:2; Razfar, 2012:63; Pan and Block, 2011:392). English language teachers' language ideologies are linked to broader social and cultural dynamics, and are formed from an early age, which is the reason why they are difficult to change (Pan and Block, 2011:392). Hall (2005:16) states that it is more difficult to change the mind sets of teachers holding on to their beliefs for many years throughout their teaching experiences.

English language teachers are employed from English-speaking countries all over the world; hence, they have different educational, cultural and ideological backgrounds. Therefore, their pedagogical practices and beliefs will differ as well (Clark, 2008:19). Razfar (2012:63) identifies language ideologies as being rooted in the social practices of teachers with their diverse individual backgrounds, reasons and intentions of transforming the context in which they teach. The personal events and experiences in the lives of English language teachers are intimately related to their performance of their professional role. Therefore, a part of language ideologies is the awareness of pedagogical beliefs, as this too can affect the outcomes within English language classrooms (Djoub, 2018:113; Gabillon, 2012:190).

In the UAE specifically, Al-Issa (2017:5) discusses the concern that the country is losing its Arabic ideologies, especially in terms of literacy. The Arabic language is seen to be at a deficit in the country, specifically amongst the younger generation (Al-Issa, 2017:5). Consequently, the local language does not receive sufficient attention for the younger generation to become integrated with its linguistic heritage, culture, beliefs, values and morals (Al-Issa, 2017:5).

The ideologies surrounding global English within the Arabic literature are such that the English language is believed to carry social and linguistic prestige over the local language, especially within the education system (Al-Issa, 2017:5). For this reason, Arab nationals and locals prefer to send their children to private schools, which are believed to promote a higher standard of the English language, in terms of curriculum and pedagogical practices (Al-Issa, 2017:5).

2.9 Perceptions of the English language

English language teachers from English-speaking countries have different perceptions and beliefs surrounding linguistic aspects of the English language (Thanh, 2018:272). Teachers' beliefs and perceptions are formed by the society that they are brought up in (Thanh, 2018:273). Thanh (2018:274), for example, state that English language teachers might teach and treat learners in the same way in which they were taught and treated at school in their own culture. Teachers' perceptions of the English language are further socially constructed by the environment in which they teach and, subsequently, their teaching styles are influenced by their beliefs (Briggs, Dearden and Macaro, 2018:676). Culture also influences our perceptions and attitudes towards teaching and learning, and therefore affects the ways in which teachers and learners behave towards each other in the classroom setting (Thanh,

2018:273). English language teachers' perceptions of teaching the English language are dynamic and include many different ideas and decision making (Briggs et al., 2018:676).

Copland et al. (2014:748) note that teachers' linguistic abilities, their attitude towards English language learners, and their teaching styles have an impact – positive or negative – on learners' attitudes towards learning the language and towards the language itself. Due to cultural and perceptual differences between teachers and learners, challenges might occur. One such challenge might be English language learners' lack of understanding of the English culture, something which is often simply due to the fact that they have little contact with people from English-speaking countries in their communities (Copland et al., 2014:741).

Thanh (2018:272) believes that English language teachers who have different cultural, social or ideological backgrounds than their learners are more likely to face conflict in the classroom setting. This is because such teachers and learners have different cultural values, traditions, linguistic rules and symbols that are deemed either appropriate or inappropriate (Thanh, 2018:272). In addition, there might be misunderstandings due to the learners' limited English proficiency (Kim, 2002:137). Djoub (2018:114) explains that teachers' emotions also play an important role in their perception of teaching and learning in English language classrooms. They might, for example, experience anxiety due to the cultural differences between themselves and the learners. This is why it is important to have a clear and concrete understanding of pedagogical practices and teaching and learning outcomes, as well as how to perceive learners and promote effective teaching and learning (Djoub, 2018:114).

Ganjabi (2011:46) discusses factors such as attitudes, expectations, learning strategies, teaching pedagogies and perceptions of English as a language that influence the process of language learning. For example, teachers who perceive teaching and learning as an intellectual process tend to teach differently than teachers who perceive it as a collaborative, learner-centred process (Copland et al., 2014:762; Gabillon, 2012:195).

Ultimately, the goal of research on teachers' identities and ideologies is aimed at learning how these factors can be harnessed to yield effective teaching and learning (Djoub, 2018:114; Wafa et al., 2016:2; Day et al., 2006:603).

2.10 Conclusion

The study presented in this thesis examines English language teachers' identities and ideologies and how these affect their pedagogical practices in one school in the UAE. This chapter provided a discussion of English as a global language and its position in the UAE, in general, and in the UAE education system, more specifically. It also provided an overview of the literature on the central concepts 'identities', 'culture', 'ideologies' and 'perceptions' within the context of teaching English. The next chapter discusses the study's research methodology.

CHAPTER 3

Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter the research methodology of the study presented in this thesis, is discussed. Firstly, an overview of and rationale for the research design is provided. This is followed by a description of the study population and the sampling method that was used. Finally, the data collection instruments, data analysis methodology and ethical considerations of this study are discussed.

The study investigates the identities, language ideologies and pedagogical practices of English language teachers at one school in the UAE, where the researcher was herself an English language teacher at the time of the study.

The study attempts to answer the following research questions, repeated here from section 1.4, for the reader's convenience:

- (i) What ideologies of English are held by English-speaking teachers of English in the school context of the UAE?
- (ii) What do classroom observations reveal about these teachers' ideologies of English and their pedagogical practices?
- (iii) What is the relationship between the teachers' ideologies of English, on the one hand, and their actual pedagogical practices, on the other?

3.2 Research Design

A qualitative research design is used to gather non-numerical data with the aim of exploring the meaning of human experiences through observations or interviews in order to ultimately gain an in-depth understanding of these experiences (Brink, Van der Walt and Van Rensburg, 2012:120). Furthermore, the purpose of qualitative research is to understand peoples' beliefs, actions, perceptions and attitudes and the reasons that underlie their behaviour (Grove, Burns and Gray, 2013:57). For the purposes of this study, a qualitative research design was used to

observe and understand English language teachers' identities and ideologies and how these impact on their pedagogical practices. More generally, the aim was to investigate how these factors influence the way in which English is taught to learners in a cycle one school.

During this study, the researcher observed the interactions between the participant teachers and their learners in the classroom context, as well as how the participants understood the culture of their environment.

3.3 Research setting and participants

For the purpose of this study, the research setting was a cycle one school located in the capital of the UAE, Abu Dhabi, Al Ain. The school staff formed a diverse community of English-medium teachers with different nationalities. It consisted of local Arab teachers, as well as expatriates, whose objective was to work together under the regulation of the school's vision and mission policy.

The school hosted 14 English-medium teachers, teaching English first language to learners from KG to Grade 4. Some teachers were required to teach maths and science in English, in addition to English first language. These teachers were required to implement rules, instructions, introductions and discipline through the medium of English. All of the learners in this cycle one school had Arabic as their first language. The only time during the school day that they came into contact with their first language, Arabic, was when they had an Arabic language class and when they had social studies with local teachers. Therefore, these learners were exposed to the English language and culture throughout most of their school days.

Alvi (2016:10) defines a study population as a group of individuals who share similar characteristics, who are taken from the general population, and who meet the criteria for a specific research study. In this study, the participants were six English language teachers who were employed at a cycle one school during the data collection period in 2019. These teachers were selected to participate in the study because they provided a platform to transfer current teaching and learning knowledge through curriculum outcomes that they had taught and implemented within their own English language classrooms in the UAE. They were all Western-trained teachers who came from English-speaking countries and had been recruited by ADEC.

The researcher herself was also a Grade 1 teacher at the cycle one school, teaching English first language and science during the time of the study. Convenience sampling was thus used due to the readiness and accessibility of the participants (Etikan, Musa and Alkassim, 2016:2), as the researcher could collect data during her free time and before or after teaching hours.

3.3.1 Participants

English language teachers in a cycle one school are known as “EMTs”, English-medium teachers. These teachers are assigned to teach English, maths or science with English as the medium of instruction. Each EMT teaches either one or two of these subjects. However, the KG EMTs are assigned to teach all three subjects and have two classes each, which they share with an Arabic teacher.

The participants demonstrated a wide range of ages, languages, majors, and years of teaching experience. They were all native speakers of English and from different countries, with different nationalities. Table 1 summarises this information. As can be seen here, three of the participants were from South Africa, two from India and one from New Zealand. All of the participants were female, and their years of teaching experience ranged from five to 24 years.

Table 1. Demographic information of the participant teachers

Participant number	Country of Origin	Educational background	Language(s) spoken	Years of teaching experience	Years of teaching experience at current school
P1	India	Bachelor's Degree in Education	English Konkani Hindi Marathi	7 years	1 year
P2	India	Master's Degree in Botany	English Hindi Urdu	20 years	1 year
P3	South Africa	Teaching Diploma in senior primary	English Afrikaans	20 years	2 years
P4	South Africa	Diploma in Education	English Afrikaans	19 years	2 years
P5	New Zealand	Education Degree	English Maaori	5-10 years	4 years
P6	South Africa	Basic primary Education	English Afrikaans	24 years	4½ years

3.3.2 Context of the study

As mentioned earlier, the context of the study was a cycle one public school that was located in Al Ain, Abu Dhabi, in the UAE. The school opened in August 2013, and accommodated both a KG programme, as well as a cycle one programme. The school's language policy was that the content subjects, English, maths and science were taught in English by Westerners.

According to the school's recent records, it hosted 1,286 male and female learners from KG to Grade 4. From KG to Grade 3, classes contained boys and girls, but the Grade 4s had separate classes for boys and girls. There were fifty classrooms and each classroom hosted around 22 to 28 learners. The school employed around 120 staff members, which included 11

people on the school management team, 50 Arabic teachers and 24 EMTs, and around 15 support staff members.

3.4 Data collection and analysis

3.4.1 Data collection instruments

In a qualitative study, data collection requires the researcher to be completely involved in terms of “perceiving, reacting, interacting, reflecting, attaching meaning, and recording” (Grove et al., 2013:268). Therefore, observations, interviews and focus groups are frequently used as data collection instruments for qualitative studies (Grove et al., 2013:268).

Brink et al. (2012:157) describe interviews as a method that is usually used during descriptive research to gain facts from participants about certain topics. A semi-structured interview is organised around a set of open-ended questions, which allows new ideas to be pursued during the interview as a result of what the interviewee says or how the question is interpreted by the interviewee. In addition, non-verbal behaviour can also be observed during an interview. During the semi-structured interview, the researcher asks a number of questions which are generally guided by a set of themes that they want to explore (Brink et al., 2012:158).

Classroom observation is a type of qualitative research. It is a method whereby the researcher observes the social or cultural behaviour of a certain group of people in order to collect descriptive data based on behaviour, events and situations (Brink et al., 2012:150). Moreover, in qualitative studies, observation allows the researcher to actively observe the participants’ social activities (Grove et al., 2013:269).

For the purpose of this study, semi-structured interviews and classroom observation were used to collect data. The researcher wanted to collect information from a number of participants in order to obtain a holistic view of the English language teachers’ identities and ideologies, and how these identities and beliefs influenced their pedagogical practices. Data was collected from six EMTs teaching English to English language learners from KG to Grade 4. Semi-structured interviews were conducted first, and classroom observation thereafter. The semi-structured interview consisted of eight questions and was audio-recorded. Questions 1 and 2 were about the teachers’ biographical and geographical backgrounds. Questions 3 and 4 were about the teachers’ perceptions of English as a global language, English in general, and English speakers in the UAE. Question 5 asked about their experiences as English language

teachers in the UAE, and Question 6 about how cultural and linguistic differences influenced the relationships between teachers and learners. Question 7 referred to the teachers' identities, and Question 8 asked what motivated them to teach English in the UAE. These questions enabled the researcher to determine the teachers' geographical and cultural backgrounds in terms of their language and education, their experiences of teaching English in the UAE, and their perceptions of English as a global language. (Appendix A contains the eight questions that guided the semi-structured interviews, and Appendix B contains the transcripts of the six interviews conducted with the participants.)

The semi-structured interviews ranged between 20 and 40 minutes. The researcher gained in-depth responses from the interviews, had the opportunity to clarify questions when they were misunderstood or misinterpreted, and also posed additional questions that were relevant to the study (Brink et al., 2012:153, 158).

According to Richards and Farrell (2011:91), classroom observation gives the researcher the opportunity to reflect on lessons, to observe behaviour as it occurs, and to watch how learners interact with the teacher, and vice versa, in the classroom. For the purpose of this study, a structured observation method, commonly used in qualitative studies, was employed (Brink et al., 2012:150). During these observations, the researcher placed herself in a strategic place in the classroom, away from the English language teacher and learners, and made field notes of what she observed in the classroom. (The form which was used to guide the observations is attached as Appendix C, and the completed forms for the observations of the six participants' classes are attached as Appendix D.)

During the Corona virus pandemic (with the first confirmed case occurring in the UAE in January 2020), the researcher's collection of observational data was limited due to time constraints, social distancing and distance (on-line) teaching and learning.

The researcher's field notes were guided by the semi-structured interview questions. Therefore, she primarily observed how the English language teachers' identities and ideologies were reflected in and influenced their pedagogical practices. An observation checklist was drawn up based on the overview of the literature concerning language teaching, language and identity, ideology, culture, cultural practices and intercultural communication (see Chapter 2). The checklist consisted of the following eight dominant themes: (i) subject matter content, (ii) organisation, (iii) rapport, (iv) teaching methods, (v) presentation, (vi) management, (vii) sensitivity, and (viii) assistance to learners.

3.4.2 Data analysis

“Data analysis” refers to various ways of interpreting data in order to address a study’s research questions (Brink et al., 2012:177). Data analysis involves exploring, transforming and categorising raw data with the objective of identifying useful information and then analysing and interpreting this information in order to obtain meaning from it (Brink et al., 2012:177). This process is essential for obtaining the results of the study and understanding what these results mean (Grove et al., 2013:593).

Thematic analysis is a method used in qualitative research to identify, analyse, organise, describe and report the themes found within a data set (Nowell et al., 2017:2). The audio-recorded interview data for this qualitative study was transcribed and then checked against the recorded interviews for accuracy (Brink et al., 2012:193). Thereafter, the transcriptions were coded by using themes. The themes allowed a meaningful grouping of the data in order to allow for its analysis. In addition, the classroom observation data was used to support the interview data. The observational data was selected to highlight the complexity of the cultural context in which the participants were teaching English.

3.5 Ethical considerations

Ethical issues have received increasing attention since the 1970s, with ethical guidelines being formulated for research design, data collection and analysis, and the reporting of research (Rogelberg, 2008:34).

The researcher received ethical clearance to engage in this study from the Research Ethics Committee (Humanities) of the University of Stellenbosch and carefully followed the ethical guidelines. (The letter of approval is attached as Appendix E.)

In order to fulfil the ethical requirements of this study, several procedures had to be followed. The study began with a research proposal that was approved by the Research Ethics Committee to ensure the suitability of the research topic and approaches to data collection and analysis. A permission letter was obtained from ADEC to enable the researcher to conduct the study at the cycle one school. This letter had to be presented to both the principal and the academic vice-principal of the school, along with a detailed description of the study, how and when the researcher planned to collect the data, and who the prospective participants were. An ethical clearance letter from the University of Stellenbosch also had to be presented to the

principal before the researcher could start with her data collection. Once ethical clearance was obtained from the university, the researcher approached the potential participants, and explained the study to them at the hand of an information sheet which contained details regarding the purpose of the study and when and how data would be collected. The researcher gave the participants ample time to read through the information sheet, ask questions and raise any concerns pertaining the study.

Grove et al. (2013:177) state that informed consent occurs when the researcher provides each prospective participant with a statement disclosing specific information regarding the prospective study. Informed consent consists of four essential factors, namely, disclosure of essential information, comprehension, competence and voluntarism (Grove et al., 2013:177). In this study, all participants were given a written consent form accompanied by a letter explaining the type of information that would be required, the degree of understanding needed about the research topic, and the fact that the participant could decide whether or not to participate in the study (Brink et al., 2012:35).

The participants were informed that the data collected would remain anonymous and confidential. In addition, participants knew that participation was voluntary and that they could withdraw at any given time without penalty or harm (Brink et al., 2012:35). To ensure confidentiality, the interviews were anonymous (participants are referred to by means of participant numbers) and did not contain any personal information that could identify the participants. Participants were ensured that the audio-recorded semi-structured interviews and classroom observations were unrelated to their employment and that the outcome of the study would not affect their position at the school in any way. In addition, participants were informed that their classroom observations had nothing to do with their general evaluation or performance at the school. Finally, data was backed up to a cloud storage system in a password-protected file to guarantee privacy.

3.6 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the research methodology of the study presented in this thesis, in terms of the research design, participants, data collection and analysis methodology, and ethical considerations. In the next chapter, the data is presented and the results of the data analysis are discussed.

CHAPTER 4

Data Analysis and Results

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the data collected for the study, as well as the results of the data analysis. The data was collected by means of semi-structured interviews and classroom observation, and was analysed by means of thematic analysis in an attempt to understand the nature of the identities and ideologies of English language teachers in the UAE, and how these identities and ideologies affect their pedagogical practices in the English language classroom. As is often done in qualitative research, the data is presented per participant.³ Instead of discussing the two data sets – the interview data and the observation data – in two separate sections, each participant's data from the two data sets is discussed together for each of the themes identified in their data. These themes were: (i) identities, (ii) (language) ideologies, (iii) behaviour and cultural understanding, and (iv) teaching methods and styles in a new cultural context.

4.2 Participant 1

Participant 1 (P1) was an Indian female teacher who spoke three languages, namely English, Konkani and Hindi. She had a Bachelor's Degree in Education and seven years teaching experience, three of which had been in the UAE. At the time of the study, she had been a Grade 2 teacher for one year at the school at which the study was conducted (henceforth, "School X") and was teaching English and maths.

4.2.1 Language ideologies

As stated in Chapter 2, language ideologies are defined as a set of beliefs, attitudes, perceptions and pedagogical practices that characterise an individual's feelings about the language(s) used within their social communities (Wafa, 2016:2; Razfar, 2012:63; Pan and Block, 2011:392).

³ Note that in the excerpts from the transcripts, curly brackets are used to indicate an action on the participant's part, e.g. *{thinking}* or *{laughs}*. Any notes by the researcher are given in square brackets.

P1 holds the belief that being able to speak the English language might suggest that one comes from a prestigious background. This was based on perceptions of English in her home country, India:

I do believe that English is one language that can connect people if they know the language... English is important as a global language for countries and people to communicate and to have something in common... English is important in the UAE also, because of the mix culture that are there and the mix nationality that are there in the UAE. Maybe the language might bring people closer, because even the people that are working in the UAE, whether they come from my country, India, many of them aren't educated and they come here just to make money, so yes, they also don't know the English language that well... So yes, English is important in the UAE...

The participant is of the opinion that English is a global language and it is used to communicate with people from different linguistic backgrounds. Her opinion is that English is an important part of the UAE. She made an implicit connection between knowing English and socio-economic class within the UAE. She explains, *So over here English {pause}... even if the child is coming from a poor family the child can speak English*. She believes that learners from any socio-economic background are afforded the opportunity to learn English because of the education system that implemented English as a medium of instruction within schools. This can be indicative of how English speakers are perceived within her own home country, India. She mentions, *... what I have notice is when someone speaks in English, in India it is considered as this person is educated...*

During the classroom observation, the researcher noted that the participant was engaging well with the learners in the target language. It was clear that English was the dominant language used; however, it was also observed that learners would communicate with each other in their mother tongue, Arabic. P1 promoted the English language and encouraged learners to participate in class discussions. Clear instructions were given, and she used a standard variety of the English language throughout the lesson when communicating with the learners. The researcher did observe that at times the participant produced ungrammatical utterances. For example, when a learner asked, *Miss, bathroom please*, she replied, *Yes, go bathroom*. She explained during the interview that she believes a simple form of English should be used when teaching: *... as a teacher should be able to communicate in a way that my children understand*.

Even if I have to say it in a wrong way, but if they are understanding, then I have made progress.

The only time the researcher heard this teacher correcting a learner's utterance was when one learner said, *Bathroom*. She replied by repeating the learner's request in a full sentence, *May I go to the washroom please?*, which the learner then repeated. The participant did not make it a point to correct her learners' grammatical errors; instead, she was more focused on getting them to verbally engage in the target language.

4.2.2 Language teaching

The participant holds the belief that learners should be able to understand her instructions, and her objective is to motivate the learners to respond in the target language:

*I try to speak slowly and clearly. Maybe sometimes I have to repeat what I said.
Sometimes I have to show an action to make them understand what I have said.
But, uhm, I have to make sure that they understand everything that I say by using
different strategies.*

The participant highlights her own opinion of what she perceives might be good practices to use within the English language classroom. She notes that she had to change her own way of thinking and had to adapt her beliefs. She explains that she needed to move away from what she believed were acceptable practices for an English language teacher:

*... an English teacher is always trying to correct a child, but I had to get out of
that habit by correcting the child. If they want to go to the washroom and they say
"teacher bathroom" ... I have to accept that. I can't say ok, you have to say
"please may I use the bathroom". I cannot expect that from them at this stage.
That is how I had to change and adapt as an English teacher.*

She had to change her own belief of what constitutes quality teaching with regards to the English language, and see her objective as ensuring that the learners have some form of understanding of the target language. This might be because she wants to enhance communication between herself and the learners or maybe she wants the learners to feel free to practise the language in the classroom.

During classroom observation it was observed that although the dominant language was English, the participant did not hesitate to use Arabic words or phrases to get meaning across

to the learners. She even asked some of the other learners to translate when she could not understand what learners were saying in Arabic. This might be because of her own language background, specifically that she comes from a multilingual country and speaks three languages. This might be the reason why she is so accommodating to learners who struggle to understand or express themselves in the target language.

It was observed that the participant did not attempt to correct the learners during conversation, and that she answered the learners in a way that she believed they would understand, even when this meant that she had to use grammatically incorrect phrases. This is in line with her reply during the interview when she revealed, ... *I had to change my way of {thinking} or my attitude towards communicating with the children.*

4.2.3 Teaching methods and styles in a new cultural context

P1 shared her beliefs about teaching methods and styles that work for her when teaching English to second language learners in a new cultural context.

The participant notes that there is a lack of understanding of the target language which causes learners to struggle:

... most of the kids lack the basics of English in terms of the letters, the alphabet, they cannot even recognise that... they learning, even subject like math and science in English. So, for them... those subjects become even more difficult. Because they just don't know the basics of English at all. So, they struggle more with writing. Since they don't know the alphabet, even if you are telling them the alphabet... they just don't know it. They struggle with writing. So, if they can't write the alphabet, they are going to struggle with the words.

She explains that she uses songs to promote communication. She says, ... *I use, uhm, more of songs to teach them words....* During classroom observation this was a focal point, because the outcomes were song-based. Even the rules were presented through a song and the teacher asked some learners to sing the songs without the music, by only looking at the relevant pictures.

4.2.4 Behaviour and cultural understanding

P1 is of the opinion that there are definite cultural and linguistic differences between herself and the learners. She explains, ... *I had to adapt more to their culture. I have to sometimes*

use the words of their language to make them understand certain things. Although the participant states that she adapted to the culture of the learners, she also notes that she does not wear the traditional black *abaya* (a long robe or cloak that covers the whole body and is worn over one's clothes):

...also, the way I dress, I don't wear the traditional clothes of their country, so yes they do notice that... they want everything covered, so they notice that I don't pay attention to the small things and these things make a difference... a teacher is someone that a child is supposed to look up to and emulate. But now comes a conflict, because the child cannot emulate me, because they are taught something else back home.

This indicates that the participant is aware that within the cultural setting her behaviour might be viewed as inappropriate by learners and parents; yet she does not fully adopt the dress code. She comments on how this might impact perceptions about her:

... because I don't speak or dress the way their parents do {pause} their parents have those kinds of expectations from the teacher, so I'm no able to be an example for them... the way I dress. I don't wear the traditional clothes of their country, so yes, they do notice that.

P1 believes that as a teacher she needs to change her way of speaking to linguistically accommodate the learners in the English language classroom. She explains this belief about language and how she incorporates the learners' mother tongue in the classroom:

... that's why when we talk in English, we need to change our ways of speaking to them. Uhm, also they are more comfortable if you sometimes use the Arabic words instead of the English word. So, if there is a need to do that... sometimes, I do, do that. I use both, the Arabic word and the English word. At least they know the relation between the two.

4.3 Participant 2

Participant 2 (P2) was an Indian female teacher who spoke three languages, namely English, Hindi and Urdu. She had a Master's degree in Botany and 20 years teaching experience. She had more than a decade of teaching experience in India, and several years within the UAE. At

the time of the study, she had been an English and science teacher for Grade 1 at School X for one year. This was her first time teaching Grade 1 learners; most of her teaching experience was with high school learners.

4.3.1 Language ideologies

P2 holds the belief that English is an important part of the UAE language and culture. She believes that learners' lack of understanding and interest in the language have to do with the lack of parental involvement. As pointed out in Chapter 2, Alhosani et al. (2017:844) and Thapa et al. (2012:71) share this view about the importance of parental involvement and how it is directly related to academic success and learner self-motivation. The participant's language ideologies were based on her perceptions of English in her own home country, India, in terms of parental involvement. She believes that parental involvement and motivation might be what is needed to help English language learners excel in their linguistic abilities. She expresses her opinion regarding parental involvement as follows:

English is definitely a global language. It is the window of the world, it is the way we communicate, it is simple, it is easy, it is understood by almost all the people of the world... in the UAE also, the medium in which we can convey from people of different nationalities is through English mainly. Uhmmm and of course we find that... uhm back home we find that most of the people know English. So it is very easy to communicate, even though the national language is Urdu and Hindi and we have our state languages, but nowadays English is very common, everybody knows it over there. But here, I find that uhm uhm English is well spoken by other nationalities, very fluently, rather than the Arabic {pause} the local people over here.

Furthermore, she made an implicit connection between socio-economic status and the ability to speak English (or the lack thereof) within the UAE. She gives her own outlook on how she perceives English speakers within the school context: *...the educated ones {pause and thinking} the teachers they know how to speak in English...* In addition, she is of the opinion that the learners should speak English more often, specifically that they should speak English to each other in the school context. She uses her own country as an example with reference to parental involvement, claiming that parents are more involved academically:

Despite of being expose to English in previous grade... back home the parents ... you know ... also need to talk in English. Of course your mother tongue is your

mother tongue, you learn it and you won't forget your mother tongue or your national language. But English ... since it is not their mother tongue, their parents back home they should instil in them the interest and uhm the feeling, motivation and love for the particular language. It will be easier for the children {long pause} in India....we find that the parents are more involved. They are very involved and in fact they make it a prestige issue. And you know, they want their child to be first in the class. And uhm they will start... Academically, the parents are much more involved.

So, the parents... uh uh we need the involvement of the parents. And over here I do not find. Parents again and again they should come, they should be accountable and they should be involved more so. And uhm you know the teaching learning process. We as teachers and them as parents ... together we can and we could it is for the benefit of the child so we need the help, the cooperation.

The participant explained why she thinks there might be a lack of parental support at home:

...most of the parents might not be educated here and uhm {pause} they don't know how to speak in English and they don't get any background help from their parents back home. So {pause} they as learners can tell their parents that uhm {pause} to practise with them at home. The parents can learn with the learners you know {thinking} there's cassettes, there's YouTube.

The participant thus strongly believes that parental involvement can play a role in improving academic development, and language learning. Alhosani et al. (2017:844) claim that supporting children, providing them with assistance outside of school and being well-informed of their level of progress, adds to their success. Parental involvement is therefore essential to help monitor learners' progress and performance. Askar (2013:23) makes this point specifically with reference to the UAE, noting the direct impact parental involvement has on educational development in the UAE, with English as the medium of instruction.

During the classroom observation, the researcher noted that Arabic was the dominant language used in the classroom. The participant used the Arabic language to gain control over the classroom. It was observed that she herself could understand and speak the language quite well. This might be because of the years she had been working and living in the UAE. The fact that the participant felt frustrated by the lack of parental involvement could be a

determining factor for her tendency to accommodate learners by using words or phrases from their mother tongue, thus displaying her language ideologies.

4.3.2 Language teaching

Teachers' perceptions of the English language are socially constructed by the environment in which they teach and their teaching styles are influenced by their beliefs (Briggs et al., 2018:676). Teaching styles can be a reflection of teachers' perceptions and attitudes of their own educational pedagogies.

P2 discusses her opinions about English in the school context, especially with reference to the learners and parental involvement:

I find that the perception of English and English speakers, that we have uhm regarding the pronunciation {pause} the accent uhm we find that for us it is very easy to converse in English. And we assume that the person in front also can at least understand. We are using very simple vocabulary, very simple English... specifically me in particular, I find it difficult to convey what I want to convey in class, because of the lack of understanding of the English language. Uhm and uhm I find that they should be a little bit more obedient. So that they can learn and speak better in English. It is only for their own benefit so that they can at least start a dialogue, whether they commit grammatical errors. We can correct their grammatical errors afterwards. And there's always an initiative ... we find that the initiative is not only coming from the student itself, but the parents they should uhh instil in the children that they should also speak English at home. So that the perception will change you know. There is no uhm two opinions about it that they need to be more protective or possessive of their language or culture. Because their language, their language ... they are born with it. Each country has its own culture, has its own way. I mean, whether it is Chinese or Russian or Indians, we carry with us our own perceptions, our own whatever... pronunciations and accents. But at the same time, at least we should make an initiative. I feel that they should change their attitude and perceive this as for their own good.

This participant stated what she believes contributes to learners' lack of understanding of the target language, as well as their inability to communicate in the target language. She based her opinion on what she thinks all the English language teachers feel. She extensively

discusses the importance of parental involvement and the difference it can make in helping the teachers with discipline problems.

Furthermore, the participant's teaching and learning was moulded within the context of the school's culture and her interaction with the learners. For example:

I always tell them in the class ... in order to learn any language you have to speak only {laughs for a few seconds} ... in fact once I told them I am going to give them extra points if they only speak in English. I wanted to motivate them in speaking English, because it is good for them.

...they should learn to speak in English more so. But they are speaking Arabic in the classes. And they are speaking to us also in Arabic. They mostly converse in the local language.

She expresses that she wants the learners in her classroom to be able to communicate in the target language. She believes that learners must be able to speak the language as most of the literature is in English: *we find that almost all the literature is in English. And in future it will help them if they want to go abroad or even if they want to continue with the studies.* She believes that in order to acquire a second language, you have to practise it. In her opinion, the learners should be motivated and encouraged to separate themselves from their mother tongue when they are in the English language classroom. This might improve their ability to communicate in the target language and to understand content that is being taught in English. However, she seemed to realise that this would be a challenging task for the learners.

During the interview she laughs and reveals, *...in fact once I told them I am going to give them extra points if they only speak in English.* This could be an indication that she knows that this might be an impossible task for the learners. During the classroom observation, it was clear that the language spoken the most in this participant's English language classroom was Arabic. This could be because she was not too concerned about the linguistic situation, since she might be used to code switching in her home country. She elaborates on her linguistic background, which might impact her language decisions in the English language classroom:

In India... my mother tongue is Urdu and Hindi, but we talk in English at home as well...it is a mixture of Urdu, Hindi and English. But I find myself comfortable... I

think. I speak, I read, I write in English. So, the medium of instruction there is English.

The participant reveals that she had to change her personality and approach to teaching to accommodate the learners based on their linguistic abilities and situations. She said, *I find that we have to more patient and have to more open and accommodating and I try to understand that the hurdles and obstacles they are facing. So, I became more patient and I try to come down to their level.*

During classroom observation the opposite of the participant's beliefs about language and teaching was observed. The researcher observed that little motivation or encouragement were offered for classroom discussions or communicating in the target language. Throughout the lesson the participant appeared in distress; this could be because she was not reaching her objective of getting learners to interact more with each other and with her in the English language. It was furthermore observed that the learners did not follow some of her verbal instructions. It was noted that on a few occasions learners would tell her that they did not understand what she was saying. The learners' response to her would be in Arabic and she would reply to them in Arabic.

4.3.3 Teaching methods and styles in a new cultural context

The participant shared her beliefs about teaching methods and styles that work for her when teaching English in a new cultural context. This was her first cultural experience with local learners and staff in the UAE. Even though she had taught in the UAE before, she had never interacted with local Emirati learners. She noted, *It's different teaching in this school. Because I was teaching in an Indian school, CBSC curriculum. I do have experience in ITC curriculum in a Pakistani school in Abu Dhabi...* This indicates that she had not been exposed to School X's system of teaching and learning, and she explains:

I find that they find it very difficult to convey and or to understand as well ... and to speak English. I am finding it very difficult uhm ... to explain to them. I feel sometimes very handicapped ... I wish I have known the local language in order to make them understand what I am trying to say. I take sciences and there many definitions and terminologies uhm which I feel I could have conveyed more better if I had known their language.

I follow the Bloom's taxonomy that is required and uhh I have to come down to their level. And I change accordingly, every day and every lesson, because each lesson and each situation is different. I try to differentiate learning, because I find that every student is different. Their understanding level is different. So, I try to group them into different groups. That is how I teach, differentiated learning, groups, I pair them sometimes. It depends on the class situation and the subject. Because science is such a subject where you know... it is demonstration that I take. I tell them to do hands-on activities. But I find that when I give them homework or revision work, they lack in commitment. Because when I ask them revision work, I find that they didn't study or do their homework at home.

It is clear that the participant has knowledge of how to effectively engage learners in a language classroom; however, it appeared that she found it challenging to teach certain concepts to the learners in order for them to understand it. She mentioned that she used a simple form of English when she communicated with the learners. She said, "We are using very simple vocabulary, very simple English". Her use of the pronoun *we* might indicate that she is trying to generalise, implying that all English language teachers face similar challenges in their classrooms. However, the participant has a Master's degree in Botany with no specific qualification in the teaching of languages and had previously only taught high school learners.

She confessed that she sometimes feels "handicapped", because she cannot communicate effectively with the learners, and this was observed by the researcher during classroom observation. She was struggling from the beginning of the lesson to connect with the learners, on their level of understanding. It was not clear what the introduction of the lesson was, as her focus was on getting the class organised. She demonstrated a sound knowledge of the content and the curriculum; however, there was evidence that she was struggling to demonstrate the subject's content to the learners.

The language barrier between the participant and the learners was evident. She tried to use a simple form of English to communicate with her learners; however, she actually used advanced English vocabulary when explaining content. This might well be because this was her first time teaching such young learners. She noted herself, *I don't have experience teaching lesser than Grade 4. Only for one I taught Grade 4. Otherwise I have experience in teaching Grade 10, 11 and 12.* This might explain why she used vocabulary that was not suitable for the learners' level of understanding.

4.3.4 Behaviour and cultural understanding

Recall that Hopkyns (2016:93) describes culture as being attached to a place, community or nation, the way people live and their perceptions of life as adopted by their community. Ahmed and Shah (2013:150) also note the strong connection between language and culture. P2 believed that there were a lot of cultural and linguistic differences between herself and the learners. She said that learners should not be influenced by the nationality or race of the teacher, and that their goal should be to learn the English language so that they would be able to converse effectively in the language. Even though she was a Muslim teacher who was dressed in an *abaya* that was full-length and a headscarf that covered her head, hair, ears and neck, she claimed that the learners' behaviour towards her was influenced by where she was from. She described the linguistic and cultural differences between herself and her learners as follows:

There is a lot of cultural and linguistic differences. Uhm linguistic more so, because the accent is different and they ... uh their accent is different, their pronunciation is different. Basically, speaking they uhm they get confused with letters. Like if I say to write ... they get confuse with a "b" and "d" and most of the letters I found ... and pronunciation also, for "p" they pronounce it as "bhh". So that is one of the major linguistic differences I found. And culture differences, since they are used to seeing their parents, the mother being dressed up with an abaya, they expect the teacher also be like that and they are basically small children ... the age group that we are dealing with. So that is also part of barricade you know, a psychological barrier that stop them what the teacher is saying to them. They get confuse or uhm they don't want to accept that this is a teacher and you have to accept her as she is. They should not be influenced by where she comes from, what language she speaks, the background or whatever it is. The main aim should be to learn, whichever country she's coming from. Basically she's coming here to teach... obey and respect her. And eventually learn and go, that should be their goal... they are coming here to study, to learn. And no teacher will teach you anything that is against the culture or against basic values.

In this teacher's opinion, linguistically, the learners struggle with the pronunciation of sounds and words. Culturally, she explained that the learners regard the teacher as a parental figure and tend to look for similarities between the teacher and their mothers. Although she was

dressed according to the cultural dress code she believed that the learners were disrespectful towards her when they realised that she was from another country.

In addition, she revealed that she had to stick to the curriculum to avoid any cultural misconceptions:

In the UAE, well we have to more restrained when we are conveying certain things. Because mmm you have to be more careful, because it should not {thinking} I mean contradict anything that is against the identity or the cultural heritage of this country. So generally, stick to the curriculum. We are bound to the curriculum.

This teacher realised the importance of cultural heritage and respect. The researcher observed the participant's cultural awareness and her sensitivity to cultural differences, which may be due to her years living and teaching in the UAE.

4.4 Participant 3

Participant 3 (P3) was a South African female teacher who spoke two languages, namely English and Afrikaans. She spoke a third language, isiXhosa, but only up until the age of three years. She had a teaching diploma in senior primary education and was studying towards a Master's degree at the time. She had more than 28 years teaching experience in South Africa and two years in the UAE. She had been a Grade 3 maths teacher for one year and was teaching English and maths to Grade 2. This was her first time teaching such low grades. As was the case for P2, most of her teaching experience was with high school learners.

4.4.1 Language ideologies

P3 holds the belief that *people need to know English* and that English is an important part of the UAE language and culture. She believes that the UAE wants its citizens to speak English so that they can compete globally in the future. As pointed out in Chapter 2, English is needed in the UAE for communication between individuals with different cultural and linguistic backgrounds living and working in the country (Hopkins, 2014:10). Alhosani et al. (2017:844) state that the UAE is highly motivated to have their learners taught through the medium of English, as the country's aim is to reach global English status. P3's language

ideologies were based on her perceptions and beliefs of the importance of English as a global language:

English as a global language is very important. That's another reason why I wanted to apply to work here, because people need to know English. I think it's the most important business language uhm and the most commonly used language of business. And uhm what I have read before coming here, uhm they want their citizens to become more globally marketable... if that's such a word, uhm so they want their children to learn English so that they can compete globally in the future and to promote their country more and for their own economic growth.

In addition, she compared the mind sets of people in the UAE to those of people in her home country, South Africa, with reference to the pivotal role of English as a global language and the use of this language in the education system. She stated:

...it differs from our own country, because back home people just speak whatever they want to speak and they fight for their right to speak their own indigenous language and they tend to give their own indigenous languages more importance than English. Whereas, personally I feel that English is more important. In South Africa in general Afrikaans people want to speak in Afrikaans and they fight to say that Afrikaans is more important than anything else and that I know, because I taught in Afrikaans schools. I have been the only English-speaking person in Afrikaans schools twice and I was the first non-white teachers in both these schools. And everything in the school happened in Afrikaans and they even had ATKV⁴... the headquarters in KZN⁵ was at the one school where I was teaching. So, they did all these activities, they were fighting for their right to keep Afrikaans alive.

Although P3 was fluent in both English and Afrikaans, she identified English as her mother tongue. She referred to having had the experience, in her home country, of working in a school setting where the other teachers' first language was Afrikaans. She was teaching English to Afrikaans-speaking learners. She said that her colleagues felt strongly about keeping their mother tongue, the Afrikaans language, alive and that this was probably due to the attached

⁴ The ATKV is the "Afrikaanse Taal- en Kultuurvereniging", which translates to "Afrikaans Language and Culture Association".

⁵ "KZN" is KwaZulu-Natal, one of the nine provinces of South Africa.

culture and heritage. This could be her personal interpretation of her colleagues' attitude towards the English language, but she felt that Afrikaans was perceived as more prestigious than English.

During the classroom observation, the researcher noted that the participant mostly communicated with the learners in English. English was the main language spoken by the teacher and the learners throughout the observed lesson. This could be due to the participant's above-mentioned awareness of the importance of English as a global language and her eagerness to promote the language. The few Arabic words and phrases that she used caused giggles and laughter amongst the learners, which might indicate that she does not use their language often.

The participant embraced the cultural and linguistic differences between herself and the learners in a way that created a fun, friendly and active classroom environment, and she showed great respect to the learners and their sensitivities in terms of their culture and language. In addition, she expressed, on more than one occasion during the lesson, that the main objective was for the learners to communicate in English with each other and with her as the teacher. The researcher observed that one of the learners asked the teacher in Arabic whether they could go to the bathroom, and she politely corrected them and assisted them in rephrasing the question in English. She encouraged the specific learner to speak English by repeating after her, *May I go to the bathroom please?* She motivated the learner in a sensitive and non-judgemental manner.

4.4.2 Teaching methods and styles in a new cultural context

As discussed in Chapter 2, effective pedagogical practices are enhanced by communicative approaches used in the classroom environment (Zein, 2017:1). P3 shared her beliefs about teaching methods and styles that work for her in her English language classroom. This was her first teaching experience in the UAE and she admitted to noticeable linguistic and cultural differences between herself and the learners. She had never taught outside of her home country before, indicating that all of her teaching experience prior to coming to the UAE was in South Africa. In addition, this was her first time interacting with learners from another country, namely the local Emirati learners. She stated, *...after a lot of applications and rejection, I ended up teaching in the UAE*. This might indicate that the UAE was not P3's first choice but that her main goal was to teach English in a non-English-speaking country and that she took the opportunity when she was accepted to teach in the UAE. She explained, *...I felt*

that I am fluent in English, reading, writing and speaking and I would like to share my passion for English to people all over the world. Talking about her experience teaching in the UAE, she said:

I teach English to Grade 2 students and last year I had Grade 3 students. Uhm, I have to speak very slowly {laughs} most of the time, I have to confess, I speak broken English, because I believe that I need to bring myself down to the student level so that they can understand me. So, they speak broken English and I speak broken English; but then I would always correct myself and have them repeat the correct way to say something that I have said in broken English. And {silence}, just for them to feel more comfortable and if they make mistakes then I correct them also in a very gentle way so that they know that it's ok to make mistakes, as long as they are trying.

{Laughs} first of all I speak very bad English, that's why I'm laughing. Uhm... I have to tone down my English all the time. I can't use the words that I would usually use, so I have to limit my vocabulary. I can't uhm use big words. And I have to find a way to find really simple terms to describe things. And I use actions more than words a lot of the time. Especially depending on the level of the child and the child learning abilities and that kind of thing.

The participant mentioned during the interview that she had been teaching two different grades at the school. This is an indication that she had experience with two different grades and that she might have a good understanding of learners' attitudes towards and linguistic abilities in the English language. Noting that she has to speak *very slow most of the time* shows that she is aware of the fact that she needs to meet the learners at the level of their English abilities. Her laughter might be due to her realising for a moment that she did not just meet the learners on their linguistic level, but had herself started to use a lower level of English. She said, *...I have to confess, I speak broken English*; however, immediately after saying this, she qualified her statement by explaining, *but then I would always correct myself and have them repeat the correct way to say something that I have said in broken English*. It might be that the participant realised that her confession of speaking "broken English" contradicted the language ideologies she had expressed to the researcher earlier.

During the classroom observation, it was noted that the participant's main objective was not to correct the learners' grammatical errors, and that the lesson was more focused on their

ability to communicate with each other and with the teacher in the target language. There was a tremendous amount of encouragement, motivation and opportunities for learners to either engage with their peers or with the participant in the target language. The researcher did not observe a lot of error correction from the participant, contrary to what she had claimed during the interview:

So, they speak broken English and I speak broken English; but then I would always correct myself and have them repeat the correct way to say something that I have said in broken English. And uhm, just for them to feel more comfortable and if they make mistakes then I correct them also in a very gentle way so that they know that it's ok to make mistakes, as long as they are trying.

During the interview, the researcher asked P3 whether or not she corrected learners' errors immediately, and she responded as follows:

As often as possible yes. It's not always possible to do it. Especially if the child is very unsure of themselves then sometimes, I won't even correct their errors. Especially if it's a child that doesn't speak out often. And suddenly this child makes an attempt... and it's as broken and twisted. I would leave it just like that. And then I tell the child that I am so proud of them for trying, because I just want to encourage and motivate and build them up and give them that confidence.

During the classroom observation the participant was clear and concise with her instructions and also made it clear what objectives she wanted to reach with the lesson. The learners were given verbal cues if they struggled to answer a question and were praised even if they only uttered one-word answers. The participant made use of technology throughout the lesson. If learners did not understand an English word, she would display a picture of the item named by the word on the interactive white board. At one stage, the researcher noted that the participant used her mobile phone to show a learner a picture of a word on Google. Learners were also given time to play a game on the internet, which was used as a plenary to consolidate understanding of the learning outcomes of the lesson. Her language belief was reflected in her teaching in that she used a simple form of English and kept the instructions simple and clear.

The researcher observed that the main resource of the lesson was the textbook, and not a lot of multiple modalities were used to implement differentiated teaching. Nevertheless, effective teaching and learning took place and it was evident that the participant was culturally and linguistically responsive and that there was a comfortable relationship between her and her

learners. She encouraged participation, was fair and impartial, and provided immediate feedback throughout the lesson.

4.4.3 Ideologies

As noted in Chapter 2, Thanh (2018:273) claims that culture influences the perceptions and attitudes of teachers towards their learners within a specific cultural environment, and that this might have an impact on the way people from different cultural backgrounds (specifically, teachers and learners) interact with one another. P3's view on perceptions of English and English speakers within the school context, was based on how the accents of different nationalities can determine one's English social status. She said:

...some English speakers are more highly thought of than others here in the UAE. I find people with an American accent tend to have priority or they are given some seniority and the British people and then the Australians and then the South Africans. It seems to be like some kind of hierarchal thing.

Here, P3 might be referring to non-English speaking people in general within the UAE. The participant did not specify whether her view was related to expatriates, the Emiratis or learners. In addition, she noted that the learners in School X were eager to learn and speak English. She explained:

...the students are very eager to learn how to speak English. I even had some in my class this year who refused to speak Arabic to each other. Even socially, when they were playing or chatting on their own ... they would speak English. And they made sure to point it out to me. They said that they want their English to improve, they want to speak English as well as I do. So, they would only speak English to each other.

This statement relates to what the participant experienced in her own English language classroom and with her own learners, and is not necessarily true of learners at School X in general. This eagerness of the learners to speak English was indeed observed by the researcher during the classroom observation, though. As mentioned, the main language that was used as a medium of instruction was English, and during the classroom observation the researcher could also hear the learners using English words and phrases amongst each other.

4.4.4 Behaviour and cultural understanding

As discussed in Chapter 2, language is part of culture and culture is part of language, and the two concepts cannot be separated when teaching English (Aydemir and Mede, 2014:13; Cakir, 2006:1). P3 is of the opinion that there are clear and transparent cultural and linguistic differences between herself and the learners. Culturally, because she is Christian and the learners are Muslim, and linguistically, because she is English and they are Arabic.

Even though she is a Christian, she was dressed in a black, full-length *abaya* and a headscarf that covered her head. She made an interesting cultural connection between herself and her learners. She said, *...they get so excited if I wear a scarf, because they feel that I'm trying to fit into their culture...* This might be an indication that the learners in her class felt a cultural connection with her, even though they realised that she was not part of their culture or religion. This might also highlight the relationship she had cultivated with the learners.

P3 highlighted linguistic and cultural differences in terms of religion, dress code and language:

There are definitely cultural and linguistic differences, because first of all I'm Christian and they all Muslim uhm I can't dress the way that I use to dress back in South Africa. I have to dress to fit in so that's the first thing, so culturally I had to adapt especially the way that I dress. My hair {laughs} they get so excited if wear a scarf, because they feel that I'm trying to fit into their culture, because they all wear scarves, even though I don't tie mine the way that they tie theirs. They all want to teach me how to do it {laughs}. Linguistically obviously yes, I speak fluent English and they all speak Arabic. But what's happening is, especially with the children who really, really don't understand I have to talk much slower, I can't speak as fast as I normally do. And then I have learnt a lot of Arabic {thinking} I had to do that. For some children, no matter how slowly I speak or how clearly, I enunciate every syllable they still don't understand a word, because they have very limited English vocabulary. And in trying to build up their vocabulary I had to learn Arabic. So, my Arabic vocabulary is growing as much as their English vocabulary is growing.

Uhm, the way I dress, so their culture has affected my dressing style, my speaking style. You have to watch what you say all the time, because you don't want to be offensive. I wear a cross on my chain around my neck and I always make sure that

that's tucked in so that no one sees it. Because once or twice when I had a slightly lower cut blouse the children have seen it then they made a big thing out of it. Uhh, I wear abayas all the time which is their cultural dress. Something I never ever thought I would do, not even in my wildest dreams back home did I think I'd be wearing a big black tent-looking thing. But that is what I live in, because it's easier to fit in.

During the interview it was apparent that P3 seemed to have embraced the linguistic and cultural differences between herself and her learners. When she mentioned the cultural differences, there were times when she had a good laugh, especially when she spoke about how the learners were so eager to teach her how to wear the head scarf. It was interesting to note that when she spoke about the linguistic differences there was a change in her approach and she did not seem as enthusiastic and excited as when she spoke about the cultural differences. This could be because the learners' English speaking abilities could be regarded as a reflection of the participant's teaching abilities. Even though P3 did not mention this explicitly, she did place a lot of emphasis on the fact that some learners were struggling to understand and speak the target language.

The participant mentioned that she had learnt some Arabic words and phrases, which might show that she used the learners' native language to link certain concepts with English words. However, during classroom observation, the researcher noted that the participant did not use a lot of Arabic words or phrases.

During the interview, P3 gave examples of how her learners seemed to observe some Western behaviours. She noted:

...because here they shake hands and as Westerners we hug. And hugging is not something that they just do naturally, but by the end of every year here, I even had the boys hugging me, because they always so sexually aware ... the boys on one side and the girls on one side. And the boys always keep their distance. When the boys start wanting to show affection to their teacher, they would start shaking the teacher's hand. They always start by shaking hands and then after a while I had the boys even hugging me.

During classroom observation, it was confirmed that the participant embraced the dominant culture. In addition, it was noted that the learners accepted her cultural diversity and both teacher and learners showed respect towards each other in the English language classroom.

P3 showed great respect towards the learners' personal, linguistic and cultural differences. Some learners were not able to provide grammatically correct answers; however, she still encouraged them to speak, even if it was just two to three words at a time. She demonstrated admirable patience towards these learners who were struggling to converse in the target language, and constantly motivated them in a respectful manner.

4.5 Participant 4

Participant 4 (P4) was a South African female teacher who was fluent in two languages, namely English and Afrikaans. She had a diploma in education, had majored in English and Afrikaans, and had 19 years teaching experience. She had more than a decade of teaching experience in South Africa and two years in the UAE. She had been an English language teacher for Grade 8 to 12 learners in South Africa and at the time of the study she was an English language and maths teacher to Grade 3 and 5 learners. This was her first time teaching such lower grades, as most of her teaching experience was with high school learners between Grades 8 and 12.

4.5.1 Language ideologies

As pointed out in Chapter 2, language ideologies are defined as a set of beliefs, attitudes, perceptions and pedagogical practices that embody an individual's feelings about the language(s) used within their social communities (Wafa, 2016:2; Razfar, 2012:63; Pan and Block, 2011:392). Pan and Block (2011:393) refer to English as the gatekeeper to the modernisation of a country's social and economic status. The UAE's goal is to reach global English status; hence, the aim is to have their learners educated through the medium of English (Alhosani et al., 2017:843).

P4 is of the opinion that English is a universal language and that it is an important part of the UAE. She believes that much emphasis is placed on the English language amongst the Emiratis so that they can prepare their citizens to take leadership positions and so that the UAE will no longer need to recruit and employ Westerners. She believes that this might be a difficult task since, in her opinion, the local children show little interest in the English language:

...their children {pause} they are not that much interested in the language here in the UAE... Even the grown-ups... I find my colleagues {long pause} people

anywhere, at the bank or wherever, people... they don't actually want to speak English. Uhm, they would ask someone to translate.

P4's language ideologies were based on her perception of English in her home country, as well as her own observations as a teacher and expatriate in the UAE:

In the UAE, according to them it's important, because they want their people to excel. They want their people to get into leadership positions. And they want to push out the Westerners and let their people be the ones leading.

The participant compared the position of English in her home country to the way the language is being promoted in the UAE. It might be that she had higher expectations of the learners she taught or of the local people she interacted with, regarding their English levels and communication abilities. During the interview, she gave an example of an interaction between herself and a police officer in which she subtly expressed her disappointment with the fact that he could not converse with her in English:

Even one day I broke down and there was a policeman nearby, and there were two and I spoke to the one and he just ... I mean he's a policeman {shaking her head} he's supposed to speak English. I talked to him and he just told one of his colleagues, "you speak". They don't want to speak the language.

The fact that P4 shook her head when she spoke about this interaction between herself and the police officer, indicates that she was disappointed that the police officer could not speak English and that she experienced disbelief. She concluded this story with the assumption that the local people do not want to speak English. She explained that in South Africa, English is the language that is being promoted. She describes how this might have an impact on learners' ability to excel when English is their second language:

Uhm, in South Africa, and that is something I really appreciate of my country, uhm English is a very universal language. English is the language in South Africa. And what I appreciate is that our language... English is being promoted so much in all the schools that all the people that don't English as a home language can actually excel, because is so much promoted, so they can actually excel in their second language. Even if English is their second language, they are on first language level.

During the classroom observation, the researcher noted that the participant used very few Arabic words or phrases. It was observed that some learners asked questions in Arabic and

she encouraged them to speak in the target language. She used a simple form of the English language to give instructions and when she addressed learners for specific reasons. Her interaction with the learners correlated with her belief that it is important for everyone to be able to understand and communicate in English. It was noted that the learners had a clear understanding of the objective in the English language classroom, namely, to communicate in the target language. It was observed that some of the learners communicated with each other in English and most of them were confident in asking questions in the target language.

Her focus on motivating and encouraging her learners to use the target language for communication might be due to experiences such as the one she had with the police officer and her colleagues. It might be that she realised that there was a need for learners to become confident in using English as a language of communication.

4.5.2 Identities

As highlighted in Chapter 2, English language teachers' beliefs impact the environment of teaching and learning in the English language classroom (Clark-Gareca and Gui, 2019:13; Borg and Al-Busaidi, 2012:6), and teachers' beliefs and identities contribute to learners' attitudes and beliefs. P4's identity was shaped within the context of her learners' English language abilities and her beliefs regarding why some learners might struggle in the English language classroom. She explained this as follows:

I feel that these children {silence} it's not their first language, you cannot expect of them to have a perfect manner of speaking... a perfect... you cannot and because they are not {thinking} it's not like in our country, in our country children are being bombarded by English. Because they find English everywhere. When they go to the bank ... English, when they go to the shop ... English. You see someone of another skin colour or race you have to adjust. But here... these people they, they are too much concentrating on their own language.

It is likely that the participant had empathy with some of the learners' inability to communicate in the target language. Throughout the interview, more than once, she mentioned that English is not their first language. She said, ... *you cannot expect of that poor child to be so good as uhm ... a child that has or doing English as his mother tongue. It's just impossible.* By suggesting this, the participant might have been thinking of her own linguistic background, because she mentioned in the interview that she speaks *a little bit of German*. It might be that she could relate to feeling the pressure of speaking or understanding a foreign

language or that she had also been in a position where she did not understand when someone spoke to her in German.

Another important point she made was that the learners do not necessarily have a linguistic support structure at home, in which the English language is promoted:

Because people expect of them to speak the language like it is their mother tongue. And it's not. I feel that, because they don't hear English at home. Their mothers, aunty, uncle, no one speaks English. The child is at school for how many hours, and he gets English for three hours, and sometimes he will have an Arabic teacher teaching English, and obviously the Arabic teacher will teach English, math or science in Arabic. Then the child only hears English for two hours.

In addition, she expressed her feelings about herself as an English language teacher and how this affected her identity as an English language teacher:

And here, I have realised that as an English teacher in this country, you are not that much respected. Uhm, because you are doing a job, you are being seen as the helper. And it affects my identity, because I'm used to being a teacher, a proper teacher, showing respect, demanding respect, being strict. Here you cannot be strict, here you cannot speak loud... here you cannot do that, because you are not from this country. And that is one of the problems, that's a problem, that's a huge problem and that is why their children do not excel, because they don't have respect, they don't have respect for other people that's not speaking their language. It has affected me definitely.

The participant believed that because English was not the learners' first language, they respected neither the language nor the teacher of the language. She compared her teaching in the UAE and South Africa, and claimed that she had to change her way of teaching when she came to the UAE:

I am much more uh relaxed, it's like you chilling. As I have said, I was teaching English back home. Back home English is being taught like the first language, English second language is being taught like the first language. There's not much of a difference... now you have a certain manner of working. You come here, you have to change your ways, the way you speak, the way you dress, everything you have to change. Because you want the child to know a little English.

Noting that she had to change, because she wanted the learners to *know a little English*, might indicate that she needed to change her identity to a certain extent within the context of the school's culture in order to connect with the learners.

During the classroom observation, it was observed that there was a link between the participant's beliefs about language and teaching, on the one hand, and her interactions with and attitudes towards the learners, on the other hand. During the lesson she mentioned that the main learning objective was for them to try to communicate in the target language. A big notice was placed on the white board which read, "We have to speak English during the English lesson".

4.5.3 Teaching methods and styles in a new cultural context

The participant shared her view about teaching methods and styles and how she had to adapt to a new method of teaching in order to accommodate the type of learners she faced in her classroom. This was her first cultural experience with Emirati learners and staff. She stated, *at the moment I am struggling a little, not just because I am a high school teacher, because these children they are lower than the grade that they are supposed to be in*. This refers to the fact that she was a high school teacher and that this was her first time teaching in a foreign country. She noted, *If I say they are in Grade 5, they actually in Grade 1. So that makes it difficult because I didn't specialise in foundation phase*. She was authentic about how she needed to learn to change her approach to teaching and learning young minds:

...I have learned to change my method of teaching. Uhm, in the past, because I'm a high school teacher, I left a lot of work {thinking} a lot of {pause}, I didn't guide as much the students, because of my past. And I have learned that I, I am the one now to guide. I'm not the one receiving the children at high school, I'm now the one that's supposed to teach them here at the foundation about how they supposed to be, how they supposed to learn at secondary level. And uhm, yah, I tried to change my way of teaching so that it can benefit them.

During the interview it was evident that the participant was reflecting on some of her failures as an English language teacher. She was pausing and thinking during this section of the interview, as if she was making sense of why she had struggled in the past and was still struggling. It was as if she realised that she herself might need to learn how to adapt and develop new teaching styles and methods in order to benefit her learners.

It was evident during classroom observation that P4 knew how to engage learners effectively during classroom discussions. Even though the textbook was the main resource used throughout the lesson, the directions and instructions were slow and explicit, and the learners could follow them.

The one thing that the researcher detected was that no resources other than the textbook were used during the lesson, except for printed worksheets that were given to learners who finished early with the textbook activity.

The fact that she was *struggling a little* was apparent, especially in the manner in which she assisted learners with linguistic differences. For example, one learner was struggling to read the word “when”, struggling to pronounce the word, and the participant herself struggled to assist the learner. This could be because she was not trained to assist primary school learners with reading. She stated, *In high school you don't need to guide the child too much*. This might also be because of her linguistic belief in the importance of being able to communicate rather than spending time correcting learners' grammar. She noted, *I was use to the child knows everything, the child can read when he comes to me, the child knows 'is' and 'are', the child knows everything*. She added:

I feel I shouldn't concentrate that much on grammar. They are not on a level where they supposed to be at. So just the mere fact that the child is trying to communicate uhm that tells me that the child is trying to communicate and you can still correct him grammatically, maybe in future, when he's a little more confident. But if you correct the child from the start that child is not going to feel free to speak English. Uhm he's going to think about “my grammar is not correct so I don't want to speak English, because people are gonna laugh at me”. But if you allow the child to become confident first and then help him with his grammar, that would help.

During the classroom observation, the language barrier between the participant and the learners was apparent. She used a simple form of English to accommodate the linguistic levels of the learners, she was clear in her instructions and she was constantly checking for understanding along the way; nevertheless, some learners still did not understand the instructions. Important outcomes of the lesson were repeated several times during the lesson and each time she allowed learners to ask questions. This could be a strategy that she used when she taught second language learners in her home country. She used hand gestures and non-verbal cues to simplify the meanings of words or instructions that some learners did not

understand. Learners were encouraged to interact with each other in the target language and she encouraged participation.

4.5.4 Ideologies

Day et al. (2006:603) state that there is a link between understanding the self in terms of beliefs, attitudes and actions, which will be prevalent in the classroom of English language teachers. Hence, the perceptions of English language teachers are indicative of effective teaching and learning and nurturing young minds with regards to the English language. P4 based her views about English on the school environment in which she was teaching at the time of the study. Her opinions about the English language were specifically directed at the learners' linguistic abilities and their lack of interest towards the target language, which she believed influenced their ability to communicate effectively in the target language. Her comments reflect her opinion on how the learners do not perceive English as important:

Whereas in this country, I perceive that people don't see English as that much of an importance. Maybe just not people I think the children. Even the grown-ups, my colleagues {thinking} some of them just refuse to speak to me. Other people they will speak but the, the ... their communication will be in such a way that I won't even understand them. And I think that some of them, because they are so young, they did learn English along the way. They did learn English, but they not confident they, they just don't, they don't see the importance of speaking English. Because I mean ... maybe they think that English is inferior and that Arabic is superior, maybe they feel that. But, yah {silence}...

Throughout the interview she referred to learners' attitudes towards the language, as well as their inability to use the language effectively for communication in terms of speaking and understanding it:

Coming here to this country is like totally different. They not even on primary level. They like ... uhm Grade R, not even knowing what is happening at school, not even knowing the language. Even though in the Grade 3, Grade 5, they still don't know the language, they still don't understand and it's as if they don't want to understand... However, their children... they are not that much interested in the language here in the UAE... They are not on a level where they supposed to be at.

It was noted by the researcher that during the interview, emphasis was placed on the participant's beliefs about the linguistic abilities of the learners she taught during her two years in the UAE, as well as on her own interactions with locals. She extensively explained and gave examples of her cultural and linguistic interaction and experience with the learners and the locals inside and outside of the school context. Her general viewpoint of the culture and language of the Emiratis was that they were not open to receiving education in the English language. Hence, she explains that their English language abilities were limited in terms of learning and communication.

4.5.5 Behaviour and cultural understanding

The participant expressed her opinion that there were definite cultural and linguistic differences between herself, the learners and her local colleagues. She made explicit connections between how these differences are handled in her home country and in the UAE. In her opinion, the Arabic culture and language were being imposed on her in the school environment. The participant was dressed in a black, full-length *abaya*; however, the researcher observed that this was not necessarily her standard dress code. There were a few occasions when the researcher observed that the participant was dressed in pants and a long-sleeved shirt, which does not conform to the dress code of the Emiratis. Even though this is not necessarily the preferred dress code, it is acceptable to wear formal attire which covers your legs and arms. She mentioned that in her home country, ...*we are much more open and Western*. In addition, she noted the obvious cultural and linguistic differences and how she needed to be tolerant of the Emiratis culture and language:

Definitely cultural and linguistic differences. I come from a background where we speak many languages, we don't just speak one, we don't just concentrate on one language at home and at school. Our families have different languages that they are speaking. Cultural-wise, these people are ... OK, I shouldn't say these people, uhm ... back home we are much more open and Western. We are much more accepting of other people, we are tolerating people's cultures, we are tolerating people's religion, we are {thinking} back home, we, we, we, I would say we are much friendlier. Then you come here and uhm you are in a box. People want to put you in a box. People want to enforce their culture, their language, their everything on you. And uhm because you are... you are in need for what they are offering you,

you are willing to put yourself in that box. You are willing to adjust, you are willing to accept, tolerate them. That actually makes you a better person.

When the researcher asked the participant how she addressed cultural and linguistic differences in the classroom, she replied:

{Long pause} ... uhm, I... I try to teach them to be tolerable towards other people. Towards other cultures, that is maybe by speaking to them, by giving them a worksheet that doesn't have just Arabic people in there that has maybe other skin colour or something like that ... So, uhm I try to do that. Linguistically, uhm... obviously because I don't speak their language, they, they, they... eh to go on their level.

The participant paused for a long time before she answered the question as to how she addressed cultural and linguistic differences in the classroom. This could be because she had not thought about this question before or maybe she had to reflect and think about whether she actually addressed these differences in the English language classroom. She explained that she did try to introduce them to different cultures, to paint a picture of what was happening outside of the UAE. She said, *Just to let them see that the world doesn't revolve around them, there is life outside UAE.*

During classroom observation, it was noted that the participant exhibited sensitivity towards learners' personal, cultural and linguistic differences. She demonstrated knowledge of their culture and similarly wanted the learners to also know about the English culture and language. For example, she constantly reminded them, in a non-threatening way, to say "thank you" and "please". The classroom environment was pro-active and friendly.

4.6 Participant 5

Participant 5 (P5) was a female teacher from New Zealand who spoke two languages, namely English and Maori. At the time of the study, she had been an English language teacher for Grade 4 and 5 girls at School X for five years.

4.6.1 Language ideologies

As pointed out in Chapter 2, Hopkyns (2014:3) and Al-Issa and Dahan (2011:3) share the view that in the UAE it seems to be premeditated that English should ultimately move to a

place of prestige, status and power on both educational and social platforms. Furthermore, the English language is used as a lingua franca and takes on the role of a common language shared between diverse individuals from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds in the country (Rao, 2019: 66; Al-Issa and Dahan, 2011:2). P5's language ideologies were based on her opinion that English is used globally as a common language for communication. She believed that in the UAE, the focus on English could be linked to the broader social and academic systems.

Her language ideologies were determined by her understanding of the position of the English language in the UAE, as her beliefs could have been shaped by the cultural setting of the school. She explained:

English is used as a common and general form of communication across the world. Currently, in the Abu Dhabi Emirates, there is a strong focus on teaching English in schools to better prepare their people for the future. I understand that one of the reasons is help align their education system with the rest of the world so that their qualifications are acknowledged globally {thinking} which will allow for more opportunities for their country and people.

She was of the opinion that there was not a lot of parental involvement or support. She added, *Some of the learners go home and their parents don't help them. Sometimes you as a teacher has no contact with the parents to discuss their children's learning or speaking abilities.*

During classroom observation, the participant established good rapport with the learners; furthermore, she modelled care and respect to all the learners and showed excitement when learners showed understanding of the language. The English language classroom setting felt organised in the sense that groups were colour-coded in accordance with the learners' learning and linguistic abilities. The interaction between herself and the learners seemed positive.

The researcher observed that a lot of focus was placed on communication in the target language and learners were well engaged throughout the lesson, specifically in terms of them communicating. The lesson started with what seemed to be a language routine in which the teacher said, "Good morning Grade 4, how are you today?" and the learners responded by replying, "Good morning Teacher, we are fine and yourself?" This was followed by a few instructions, such as "Take out your books and pencil cases" and "Please be seated".

This type of language routine is in alignment with P5's beliefs related to language ideologies, as she explained during the interview. It might also be linked to her own experience as a learner. She indicated that she was bilingual and that English was the language of instruction at her school: *I began my schooling in bilingual environments where I spoke both Maori and English; however, as I moved through the education system English became my first language.* Hence, it could be that she had an understanding of the linguistic challenges that some English language learners face in the classroom.

In addition, the researcher noted that throughout the lesson, P5 did not lapse into the learners' language to regain control of the class or to explain any terminology. Throughout the lesson, she presented herself as an English language teacher and an English speaker. Additionally, the researcher noticed that none of the learners attempted to speak to the participant in Arabic. This could be because the learners were older, as they were in Grade 4, and understood the importance of improving their English communication skills. It could also be that the participant had highlighted to them the importance of practising communication by using the target language in the English language classroom.

4.6.2 Identities

According to Hopkyns (2014:4), identities can be constructed and shaped by a school's culture and the English language teachers' interaction with the learners. P5's identity was shaped by her commitment to teaching English language learners in the cultural context of the school. For example, she mentioned, *I use UAE culture to engage students {thinking} example, clothing, landmarks, animals, phrases that allows students to better understand concepts being taught.*

During classroom observation, it was observed that she exhibited knowledge of her learners' culture. She was open to a collaboration between the English language and the Emirati culture. For example, for a few minutes towards the end of the lesson, the participant and the learners had an open discussion about culture. The learners who participated in this discussion exhibited excitement as they tried their best to explain Eid and their traditional holidays, as they were celebrated in the UAE, to their teacher. The researcher found this interesting, because it was not linked to the learning outcomes of the lesson; however, it appeared that the participant chose a topic that might be easier for the learners to communicate about. There was a strong feeling of mutual respect between the participant and the learners, as well as a strong work ethic during classroom activities. The cultural discussion might have resulted

from P5's desire for a cultural experience. She mentioned during the interview that, *We wanted to experience something new and show our children a new culture and the UAE offered a great package for teachers to be able to live abroad.*

4.6.3 Teaching methods and styles within the English language classroom

The participant shared her beliefs around teaching methods and styles that worked best for her as an English language teacher. During the interview, most of the teaching methods that she referred to involved differentiated teaching and learning. She indicated that her teaching methods were considered to add to the effectiveness of teaching and learning in a positive classroom environment:

I try to foster a positive classroom environment with positive behaviour management {pause} rewarding positive behaviour and managing the less desired behaviour by keeping a four-to-one [(i.e. small group)] positive behaviour program.

She shared her own opinion regarding the current curriculum used by the school and how she amended her teaching styles to accommodate the curriculum while ensuring effective teaching and learning. She explained:

I begin an English class with a starter or warm-up. Example, songs, poems, shared reading, games. I then introduce the learning objective and model what I want students to do. {Sigh} I then allow students time to discuss and share their ideas before sending them away to complete their task. I will work with a differentiated group, example my lower ability learner completing a differentiated task that still allows them to meet the learning objective. We share, reflect, review our learning at the end. {Deep sigh} Because our current curriculum is textbook-based and curriculum-centered, not child-centered, I often make notes of areas that we may need to revisit at a later date as we often have to move on to the next learning outcome outlined in the pacing charts and text book. I teach a lesson this way because it is the best way, I know how to manage the class and curriculum within a 45-minute period. I try to use best practice where possible and try to differentiate to the learners' needs where possible.

During this section of the interview, the participant painted a clear picture of what to expect in her English language classroom. She sighed as she was talking through the lesson with the

researcher, indicating that this was a normal routine that she followed every day. It appeared as if she was reciting her lesson, which might reflect her organisational skills. The routine and teaching methods and styles that she mentioned during the interview aligned with those observed during classroom observation. The researcher noted that most of the points she mentioned in the interview with regards to her teaching, was executed: the morning routine, learners singing on the carpet and her working with some of the different groups, which all aligned with the learning outcomes.

Although it was noted that most of the lesson was from the textbook, the participant had planned activities for each group. The researcher specifically noted how some learners would complete the textbook activity and move on to the group activities. At some stage during the lesson, the participant was busy reading with a few learners on the carpet. During this time, she prompted them into discussion about the content of the book they were reading. This teaching style was supported by the statements relating to language ideologies that she made during the interview.

The participant used pictures, the interactive whiteboard and visual images to help learners to understand certain objectives of the lesson. She used visual images from the internet when learners struggled to understand the meanings of certain words. English was definitely the dominant language in the classroom. Learners knew what was expected throughout the lesson and a lot of interactive activities were displayed around the classroom. P5 was extremely actively involved in the learners' teaching and learning process and motivated learners to be actively involved with the lesson.

4.7 Participant 6

Participant 6 (P6) is a South African female teacher who was fluent in two languages, namely English and Afrikaans. She had a Diploma in Basic Primary Education and had 24 years teaching experience. She had six years teaching experience in the UAE. She had worked at a private institution for more than a year. At the time of the study she had been a KG teacher at School X for four and a half years. All of her teaching experience was with KG learners, a grade referred to as "Grade R" in South Africa.

4.7.1 Language ideologies

As pointed out in Chapter 2, Thao and Tai (2018:254) note that English as a global language is used for communication in multicultural contexts across the world. Consequently, some apprehensions have been expressed over the effect that global English has on local languages, cultures and identities (Hopkyns, 2016:88).

P6 was of the opinion that English was a global language. Specifically, within the UAE, her view was that even though English as a language was an important part of the education system, it also affected the cultural aspect of the Arabic language. In Chapter 2, it was noted that Al-Issa (2017:5) discusses the notion of the country losing its Arabic ideologies, specifically surrounding its literacy. P6 was of the opinion that the majority of the older generation feels that English exposes the younger generation to a more Western culture. She admitted that although English might offer great opportunities, it could also be damaging to the Emirati culture and heritage:

I think English is seen as the language that open up the world to you. So, people often, what they do to promote that, they tend to let go of their own cultural background, they tend to let go of their language, because oh Arabic, Afrikaans or whatever language is not seen as good anymore, only English. So, a lot of the basic principles of language gets put to the back side, because now we need to learn English. And yes, it does open up the world to you, but you are forgetting your roots in a way. And you know, forgetting the rules of grammar, forgetting the rules of all kinds of things. It can have its benefits, but it also can be detrimental to the younger children.

Most of her opinions concerning her language ideologies were based on her own experience as an English language teacher teaching in South Africa, a multilingual country. She explained, *I had to speak different languages in one day, even though I was the English teacher. I had to know a little bit of isiXhosa, I have to know a little bit of Afrikaans...* This experience might have added to her beliefs about English and how it can shape the minds of children. It could be that she witnessed how learners from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds became more familiar with the English language and culture. She added:

I think they see it as opening the world to them and that's great {deep sigh} because it exposes their country, it exposes the world to something different and they are tolerant of this. And their people who are not expose to English because of the language being English, the older generation learns from the younger generation.

English is seen as now it's going to open up the world. Globally things will get better for you if you speak English. So, it, it {deep sigh} the Arabic language is almost seen lesser than {pause}...

Subsequently, she suggested that the English language was perceived as the language of prestige in South Africa. She referred back to her own upbringing, growing up in an Afrikaans and English family. This experience of growing up in a bilingual home might have had an impact on the way in which she implemented language in the English language classroom:

So, most of my extended family were Afrikaans-speaking. And myself and my brother were the only English-speaking amongst the cousins... English was being seen in my family {thinking} I don't know if it was just my family or in general, like oh they are English-speaking so they live better, they dress better... that was the perception amongst my cousins and they go to a posh school, so almost like keep our distance from them. Like they treated us differently, the family treated us differently {shrugging shoulders}.

The participant compared her own situation as a child growing up to the learners' situation in the UAE, noting that *I could see as a child that the second language, my second language Afrikaans, were seen as inferior compare to English.*

During classroom observation, the researcher noticed that the participant implemented a lot of the Arabic culture in the lesson. She displayed a wide range of knowledge about and sensitivity towards the learners' culture and linguistic diversity. For example, when she displayed flashcards, most of the pictures were related to the culture of the Emiratis. Another example is when she flashed the letter "D" and it had a picture of dates, which are an essential part of the UAE's culture, identity and heritage.

4.7.2 Identities

As noted in Chapter 2, for the purpose of this study, identity was focused on social, personal and linguistic factors of the individual in a particular society (Hopkins, 2014:5). In addition, Al Allaq, (2007:2) describes language and culture as intertwined and states that language also has a strong link to identity, cultural values and beliefs. Thus, the participant's identity as an

English language teacher was shaped by her personal qualities as a language teacher, as well as the school's culture, that could have moulded her beliefs. Emphasis was put on the notion that she understands her duties and commitments towards being an English language teacher. She notes, *I'm here primarily to promote English*. She believes that a different approach to teaching English might be directed more towards using the target language as a communicative strategy:

You see {thinking} once a child immerses in communication, grammar falls into place later. You can learn about a full stop or whatever... I need for you to tell me what are your needs; "I need to go to the bathroom please.", "I am hungry." I just need for them to communicate. So, therefore, like things like songs and everyday things where they are hearing the language is so important. The language needs to go with an action, especially with the younger learners, like songs, rhymes...

These expressions of the participant highlight her beliefs around the importance of being able to communicate effectively in the target language. In the same way, she expressed that it was equally important for the learners to relate the two languages to each other in order to connect Arabic words with their English equivalents:

...obviously there's other subjects that go with it ... the science and math...teaching it through English. But the concepts are too difficult for the children. Whereas if I just did ordinary communicative type of language acquisition the children would flourish more. That's exactly where I have seen the difference, I've always said to my administrative staff that {long pause} you know we always teaching the children via a print rich environment, and we always have like there's the Arabic word, and there's the English word {deep sigh} I commend that because that is how I used to teach back home as well. The difference, however, is that yes there's the English word and there's the Arabic word, but it limits me as a teacher because I am not allowed to use the Arabic word. Whereas in my teaching before I used both.

The participant admitted that she was allowed to have pictures depicting words of both languages, Arabic and English; however, she was not allowed to use the Arabic word. Her beliefs as an English language teacher were shaped by understanding her learners' needs in the classroom. During classroom observation, the researcher noted that the classroom was enriched with visual learning materials that were posted on the wall. The classroom was warm and it was clear that the learners felt safe and that effective teaching and learning took place.

The beliefs of the participant were indeed observed by the researcher. Learners in particular seemed excited and listened attentively to the participant. At the start of the lesson, the learners were seated in a horse shoe shape on the carpet with the participant in front of them. She was also seated on the carpet with her legs crossed. The researcher thought that this was a good gesture, to show the learners how she wanted them to be seated. The lesson started with what was perceived as a morning routine. The day, date, weather and the learners' feelings were discussed. It was clear that they knew what was expected from them. Objectives and learning outcomes were explained on the carpet and simple vocabulary was used. A lot of visual cues were used to enforce understanding. Learners were then directed to go and sit in their groups where activities had been placed for them.

Throughout the lesson, P6 gave the learners hugs and used words of motivation and encouragement, for example, "Good job", "Well done" and "Good effort, now try again please". It was observed that some learners were extremely excited to show their completed activities to the participant and this was well received by her. The researcher noted that, except for instructions from the participant, there was not a lot of English communication between herself and the learners. Most of the learners communicated with the participant in Arabic and she responded in English. This might be because the learners were still young and for some this might be their first encounter with an English language teacher. In these instances, the participant would politely ask the learners to repeat the sentence or words after her. She emphasised each letter and sound and the shape of their mouths as they uttered words and phrases. To support this, she noted during the interview:

And I have said this many a times and I have experienced this in my own country as well {silence} especially with young learners {loud voice} promote mother tongue first! The second language falls into place faster once the children are grounded in their mother tongue first. For the younger learners, 0 to three or 0 to five or even six years old immerse the children in their mother tongue. Children need to learn the second language together with their mother tongue. For the second language to come on board faster... you got to promote the mother tongue. Because the child's initial concept is that he is going to learn in his mother tongue first.

The participant emphasised her belief that a child's mother tongue needs to be promoted. This could relate to her view around losing one's cultural and linguistic identity when a second language takes priority:

...exposing children to the West, they forgetting their values, their roots, their culture. So, anything that's foreign and takes away from their culture is like a no-no. The kids again are open.

4.7.3 Ideologies

Culture influences English language teachers' perceptions of and attitudes towards teaching and learning, affecting the way teachers and learners behave towards each other in the classroom setting (Thanh, 2018:273).

The participant based her perceptions of English and English speakers in the UAE, on her belief that the Arabic culture and heritage should be preserved. She perceived a difference in attitude between the older and younger generation with reference to the English language and exposure to a more Western culture:

...even though the elders are making sure that you will respect your culture, you will respect your language, they are almost resistant of wanting to speak English, because that's their way of holding on to the culture and holding on to the language. And that should be obviously commended, uhm I think what needs to happen is {thinking} there need to be this constant {thinking} like yes there is English, but we cannot forget our culture, we cannot forget our Arabic and we need to put the mother tongue on a higher level than the second language. Almost promote the mother tongue, especially because I work with the younger learner.

The participant expressed her perceptions of English, noting specific relations between the target language, mother tongue and culture:

When I came here it was said "speak to the child in English!" Uhm, I can do that, but they not going to respect me, because they don't understand me. But if connect with them within their mother tongue, even if it's one word, two words, I am going to get a better response as opposed to me just throwing English at them, throwing English at them.

When the researcher asked the participant whether she thought that the older generation was more open to speaking the English language, she responded by saying, *No, because I think for them it's so foreign.*

Furthermore, she also noted how valuable parental support and involvement were to motivate learners to become more open to learning in the target language. She based her opinion on the belief that if the parents showed little or no interest towards the English language, then there was a possibility that the learners might adopt the same attitude. She claimed:

And some also see it as I don't want to learn it, because it's too difficult so I am just going to pretend that I don't hear you or I don't understand you. But it's requiring too much effort for the brain to switch and translate. And also, the culture of the parents... how open are the parents? The children learn from their parents. If the child sees that the mother or the father is not making any effort to learn the language, they are not going to make any effort to learn or speak the language. They going to think that they don't need to speak the language, because they are not going to need it. So why should I learn it?

In addition, she compared the linguistic abilities and the socio-economic status of parents and learners from public institutions to those of parents and learners from private institutions. Specifically, she compared the learners in her classroom to the learners she had taught at a private institution in the UAE. She explained:

...there's that barrier {sigh} this is what I see in the public schools. I had the advantage of teaching in a private school here in the UAE. And the perception in the private school is way different.

I think because where I am now, it's almost seen as a lower economic group and there we had more professional people. You had parents who were doctors, you had parents who were lawyers who were exposed to the English language and they wanted the best for their children. So, they put more effort into their children to acquire the English language. Which meant that if they needed to get a tutor to help, they would do that. And, and it was seen like you need to know English, because it's going to open the world to you. Whereas here, it's almost like they don't really need to know the English language. The children only hear English at school, and in the public school I find that my learners struggle more than my

learners in the private school. My learners in the private school flourished {pause} in terms of language acquisition and communication.

This observation from the participant might have derived from her interaction with the learners and the parents with different socio-economic statuses.

4.7.4 Teaching methods and styles in a new cultural context

The participant shared her beliefs about teaching methods and styles that worked for her in the English language classroom. She explained that her teaching styles and methods focused on having respect for the learners' culture and learning to understand what was deemed appropriate, linguistically and in terms of non-verbal communication. She gave a good example of how certain hand gestures that were viewed as inappropriate in her own culture, were an appropriate part of communication in the UAE:

I try to be very respectful to the culture. Even though sometimes when teaching language, you got to go beyond their culture so that you can say that is how you do it in English or that is how and what the word means in English. It was difficult, because uhm you have to learn very quick that certain signs that you find uhm not OK, is quite OK to communicate with in Arabic. So, I think that you as the teacher have to learn first about the child's culture. And stop enforcing your culture {thinking} because again we perceive {deep sigh} because I was raised English, English is the smarter language, but back up. You also have to reach out and learn about another culture.

The emphasis on the English language teachers' understanding and awareness of the learners' culture might be due to P6's own cultural experience in her home country:

I think for me coming from a Muslim background it makes it stronger, but also there are times that I struggle, because what is acceptable in my county {long pause} because I had to marry my Muslim culture with my Western culture too in South Africa.

It might thus be that this participant has a deeper understanding of the pivotal role that a language plays in its culture and heritage. She herself comes from a Muslim background and maybe understands the values and morals of the Muslim culture and language in terms of religion.

During classroom observation, it was evident that the participant had a sound knowledge of the Arabic culture. She made reference to what was acceptable and unacceptable when learners did not obey the classroom rules. For example, the researcher noted that two learners were having a disagreement and the participant overheard one learner using inappropriate language in Arabic. She immediately intervened and explained to both learners that this behaviour was unacceptable, by making reference to their culture. She did this in a respectful manner and used simple words and illustrations. She even referred them back to the classroom rules.

The language barrier between the participant and the learners was clear, which supported her view on her teaching methods and styles in the English language classroom. However, to support the learners linguistically and to help them understand the learning objectives, the lesson included a variety of different teaching and learning materials. The participant gave clear directions and instructions in a respectful manner and she constantly checked for understanding along the way. A lot of Arabic words and phrases were used in the lesson and were accompanied by their English translation. Even when some learners asked questions in Arabic, the participant translated it in English and would have the specific learner repeat after her. She explained during the interview:

Because the child's initial concept is that he is going to learn in his mother tongue first. And that is how teach too. I do not tell the child; "This is green, this is green, this is green." The child won't understand, this is foreign {thinking} but if I give the Arabic word for green and use it together with the English word for green {pause} before the end of the week they should know the English word for the colour green.

The participant based her opinions surrounding her teaching methods and styles on her previous teaching experience in South Africa. Based on her own personal teaching experience, during which she taught in a multilingual and multicultural environment, it could be that she was well aware of the linguistic challenges some learners might face:

And I find that, that is how the children back home acquired the English language so much faster. Even the stories our children were exposed to, the books were in the three languages that was prevalent in the class {pause} so English, isiXhosa and Afrikaans.

In summary, the participant's views as an English language teacher within the UAE were mostly based on the cultural and linguistic aspects of the learners in the English language classroom.

4.8 Conclusion

This chapter presented the results of the data collection and the thematic analysis of this data, per participant, combining and comparing data from the semi-structured interview and classroom observation. The next chapter concludes the thesis by returning to the research questions first mentioned in Chapter 1.

CHAPTER 5

Discussion and Conclusion

5.1 Introduction

The study reported in this thesis investigated the identities and language ideologies of a group of six English language teachers at a cycle one school in the UAE, and explored whether their identities and ideologies had an impact on their pedagogical practices. The study employed qualitative methods to address the three major research questions. The qualitative data was obtained through a semi-structured interview with and classroom observations of the six English language teachers representing different grades (Grades R, 1, 2, 3 and 4). The results of the data analysis that were presented in Chapter 4, will now be discussed in the context of the research questions presented in Chapter 1 and the literature review presented in Chapter 2.

5.2 Research Question 1: English-speaking teachers' ideologies of English

The first research question was “What ideologies of English are held by English-speaking teachers of English in the school context of the UAE?” (cf. section 1.4). Different themes were evident in the participants' responses. These themes highlighted the complexities of language, identity and ideologies in the English language classroom. The results of the data analysis yielded four main topics: English as a global, learners' low levels of English proficiency, lack of parental involvement, and fear of loss of language and culture. Below, the findings of the study with respect to the first research question are discussed in terms of these four topics.

English as a global language

In order to address the first research question, the participants were interviewed about their perceptions of the role and function of English as a global language in the UAE, in general, and in the school context, specifically. They were also asked to compare this with their perceptions of English in their home country. This was to elicit data that might lead the researcher to a deeper understanding of the participants' identities and language ideologies

and how these affect the teaching and learning environment of the English language classroom.

The participants come from different bilingual and multilingual language backgrounds and countries, namely, India, South Africa and New Zealand. The majority of the participants displayed empathy towards the learners' linguistic abilities and struggles, and promoted communication and class discussions in the target language. The results of the analysis of the interview data and the classroom observation data indicate that the participants perceive English as a global language. Furthermore, they believe that English is the language of communication globally and is used as a lingua franca between individuals with different linguistic backgrounds. The literature review in Chapter 2 makes it clear that this belief is justified. Badry and Willoughby (2016:194) report that English has become the language of communication globally, while Rao's (2019:76) study presents evidence that "English is the only language that is internationally spoken and accepted". Similarly, Hopkyns (2014:1) identifies English as the official language in 52 countries worldwide, and in 2012 already, Crystal (2012:155) noted that "one in three of the world's population are now capable of communicating to a useful level in English". When Hopkyns (2014:11-12) argues that almost every international country is using English in some form or another, she makes specific reference to the UAE, noting that English is becoming a language of prestige and power here, as well. This prestige and power, of course, leads to more people wanting to learn how to communicate in English.

The interview responses indicate that the participants share similar views and opinions of English as a global language, and that their main objective is for their learners to become proficient enough to use English on an international platform. A number of former studies yielded similar results regarding the impact of English as a global language on the teaching of this language. Pan and Block (2011:395) report that teachers and learners acknowledge that English has the current status of a global language, and that teachers and learners are in strong agreement that English is needed for the development of international economic business (Pan and Block, 2011:395).

Learners' low levels of English proficiency

Although the participants realise that there are definite language and cultural differences between themselves and their learners, they share the viewpoint that English should be the dominant language used in the classrooms. However, in the current study, the majority of the

participants indicate that this is almost impossible due to the learners' low levels of English competence. The results of the observational data indicate that the participants implemented their own ideas and creativity to teach these learners the target language. The participants' own identities and beliefs about the English language were evident in their pedagogical practices.

One of the concerns raised by the participants was that English, maths and science were being taught in English, as if this was the mother tongue of the learners. The participants believed that some of the terminology used in these subjects, relating to important concepts, was too advanced for the learners to grasp. Most of the participants identified a gap between what the learner was supposed to know according to the English curriculum and the learners' actual levels of understanding, comprehension, reading, writing and speaking in the target language. Hence, the observational data reflected that the participants applied their own beliefs about English and how to effectively teach the language. The same concern is highlighted in a study by Belhiah and Elhami (2015:18), who identify a similar gap in the UAE's education system with English as the medium of instruction. These researchers reported that even though the learners' low proficiency in English had a negative impact on their performance, the majority of the learners showed improvement in their listening and speaking, reading, and communication skills as they progressed through the school system, because of the use of English as a medium of instruction (Belhiah and Elhami, 2015:20). They argue that implementing English as a medium of instruction affords learners a significant amount of "comprehensible input in English as well as a multitude of opportunities to gain exposure to authentic English oral and written text" (Belhiah and Elhami, 2015:20).

The participants noted that the learners needed to learn to communicate effectively by using the target language regularly in the classroom setting. Al-Issa and Dahan (2011:13) discuss how English is implemented and considered important in the early years of education in the UAE, subscribing to the "earlier is better" hypothesis. However, the participants in the current study were concerned about the fact that all content subjects were being taught through English as the medium of instruction, while the learners' English competence was still very low. Their experience was that most of the learners could not understand what they were being taught in the English language classroom, let alone communicate in the target language. Similarly, Thao and Tai (2018:254) note that just because English is being used globally, this does not mean that it is successfully used for effective communication everywhere.

Clark-Gareca and Gui (2019:147) suggest the effectiveness of using communicative methods in English language classrooms. All of the participants agreed that communicative strategies are a more effective teaching method and style for ensuring that learners obtain communication skills. The participants have the language belief that they have to use a simple form of English to communicate with the learners or to explain content. Furthermore, the results of the interviews and classroom observations indicate that they toned down their own English to suit the levels of the learners' linguistic abilities.

The results of the data analysis reveal that there is a high level of commitment from the teachers. They want the learners to thrive when it comes to learning and acquiring English to a level where they can use it internationally. Recall that, according to Pan and Block (2011:393), English is often described as a language that is the gatekeeper to the modernisation of a country for social and economic prestige. There are two ways in which a language can be made a priority in a country: firstly, using the language as a medium of communication within the government, media and the education sector; and, secondly, making the language an official language of the country so that it is implemented as the language of instruction in all government schools and learning institutions (Crystal, 2012:4-5). The UAE is making use of the first strategy, namely making English the language of education (amongst other domains). What the participant teachers in the current study seem to aspire to is helping their learners to acquire a level of proficiency in English so that they can reap the benefits believed to come with it at a national and international level.

Lack of parental involvement

The interview data also highlighted the lack of parental involvement in the UAE. The participants perceived the lack of parental involvement as an important factor which adds to the learners' lack of understanding and communicating in the English language. The two Indian participants were both of the opinion that Indian parents are more involved in their children's education than parents in the UAE. The participants noted that the majority of their learners were only exposed to English at school and received little or no exposure to the English language in the home environment. The majority of the participants were of the understanding that not many of the local parents were proficient in the English language. They believed that learners were being expected to learn content that was actually meant for mother tongue speakers of English. Furthermore, the findings revealed that the learners showed little interest in the English language.

Askar (2013:7) argues that parental motivation, involvement, attitude, support and commitment have an effect on learners' attitude towards learning in English language classrooms. Alhosani et al. (2017:844) and Thapa et al. (2012:71) share this view on parental involvement, namely that it is directly related to academic success and learner self-motivation. They argue that supporting one's child, providing them with assistance outside of school and being well-informed of their level of progress, adds to their success (Alhosani et al., 2017:844). Askar (2013:23) emphasises the direct impact that parental involvement has on educational development in the UAE, with English as the medium of instruction. The findings of the current study lead the researcher to concur with these authors. The interview data indicate that the lack of parental involvement, as well as parents' lack of knowledge of English, influence learners' perceptions of and attitudes towards learning English. This implies that parents have a social responsibility to motivate and encourage the English language within their households.

Fear of loss of language and culture

In the current study, participants were of the opinion that there was an underlying fear of language and culture loss amongst Emiratis and specifically amongst the learners in the cycle one school in which these teachers were teaching. This might explain some learners' negative attitudes towards English, as well as their lack of understanding in and knowledge of the English language.

The language of a country gives its people a sense of belonging, as they express their values, traditions and cultural heritage through their language (Belhiah and Al-hussien, 2016:343). The language shapes the individuals of the country, in terms of their character, their beliefs, their values and their identities (Belhiah and Al-hussien, 2016:343). Arabic is thus the language that defines the identity of an Arab (Belhiah and Al-hussien, 2016:345). On the one hand, it is argued that a learner's culture and religion can create a barrier to learning English, as the English language and culture may be seen as foreign and intrusive (Ahmed and Shah, 2003:150). On the other hand, Crystal (2012:3) argues that if people perceive their mother tongue as being threatened by global English, they may feel resentful towards the language. This might lead to the fear that one's identity, culture, values, morals and sense of belonging are being undermined.

Hopkyns (2014:3) and Al-Issa and Dahan (2011:3) argue that the implementation of English as a medium of instruction throughout the education system in the UAE seems to be

premeditated and aimed at ultimately moving the language to a place of prestige, status and power on both educational and social platforms. In fact, Hopkyns (2014:3) and Al-Issa (2017:4) believe that even though Arabic is the official language of the UAE, it is already losing its prestige, status and values to the competitive global English language. This has impacted the UAE as Arabic teachers are no longer the primary source of educational values or role models to learners (Al-Issa, 2017:5). Instead, learners are being exposed to the English language and culture and might regard their Western, English-speaking teachers as role models.

Said (2011:191) states that losing a language is losing a culture and the identity of a country. And Al-Issa and Dahan (2011:3) note that there have been negative reports with regards to the effects of English on the Arab language, stating that “Arabic is one of those languages at risk”. If this is true, then the UAE is in danger of losing its heritage, while it welcomes and empowers English in its education system.

5.3 Research Question 2: Insights from classroom observations

The second research question was “What do classroom observations reveal about these teachers’ ideologies of English and their pedagogical practices?” (cf. section 1.4). In response to this research question, it was noted through the interviews and classroom observations that the participants did not all use the same pedagogical practices in terms of their teaching strategies and methods. The researcher noted that each participant had their own teaching methods and styles.

By observing the participants, the researcher could make some connections between their beliefs about and their perceptions of teaching English to language learners, on the one hand, and their pedagogical practices, on the other hand. Their interaction with the learners was enjoyable and insightful to observe. Most of the classrooms felt warm and organised, and were colourful.

Below, the results of the analysis of the two data sets (the interview data and the classroom observation data) are discussed in terms of the two prevalent themes, namely, perceptions of the communicative approach to language teaching, and participants’ teaching methods and styles.

Communicative approach to language teaching

Participants voiced their opinions surrounding communicative approaches versus grammar teaching approaches to language teaching, stating that their aim was to enable learners to communicate more information despite grammatical errors. The analysis of both the interview data and the classroom observation data showed that the participants' main objective was for the learners to communicate effectively in the target language. What they wanted to nurture was thus the learners' communicative competence.

Eken (2015:63) argues that the communicative approach to language teaching should be implemented if the aim is to improve learners' communicative competence (see, also, Zein, 2017:2; Thao and Tai 2018:254). This approach was designed to motivate learners to communicate meaningfully in English. And this is precisely the goal that the participants in the current study had for their learners, namely, that they should be able to use the target language to express their thoughts and opinions.

Teaching methods and styles

Even though the UAE is quite rigid in terms of its educational policies, curriculum and structure, the researcher observed that in School X the English language teachers were allowed to be creative.

From the classroom observations it was clear that the participants gave their learners opportunities to communicate in English and involved them in classroom discussions in English. These discussions were controlled and facilitated by the participants. Only one participant struggled with classroom management, while the other participants showed moderate classroom management styles; thus, effective language teaching and learning were displayed.

The participants showed excitement, enthusiasm and commitment when learners even just tried to participate in these linguistic discussions. Although there was evidence of effective teaching methods and styles, not all of the participants used a range of pedagogical practices that facilitated diverse learner needs. All of the participants made use of technology to enhance the language learning process. However, the results indicate that the textbook was the main resource used. The results reveal that only a minority of the participants adapted their teaching for a differentiated classroom environment in which learners did different activities based on their linguistic and learning abilities.

The interview data showed that the majority of the participants were of the opinion that there was a general lack of understanding of the English language amongst the learners. Even though the participants themselves raised this concern, the classroom observation data showed that they did not make use of a wide range of teaching techniques to enhance learners' understanding of the target language. The findings reveal that all of the participants had good content knowledge; however, only one participant exposed learners to various activities within the classroom environment, and gave learners different activities based on their linguistic and learning abilities, rather than sticking to the textbook. This was only noted in the KG classroom. It should be noted, though, that the results of the observational data showed that even when learners were seated and divided in groups, possibly according to their learning abilities, not much attention was directed towards differentiated teaching methods.

Furthermore, the classroom observations indicated the excessive use of repetition of words and sentences, songs and picture cards, especially in the lower grades (KG, Grade 1 and Grade 2). It should be noted that Davis and Fan (2016:67) report that the implementation of songs and vocal repetition are effective in promoting the acquisition of English. The participants' learners knew the English songs and could use some of the phrases from the songs in real life situations, and each song was directly linked to the outcomes of the lesson.

Finally, it is worth noting that some of the participants had never taught cycle one learners before and had been high school teachers in their home countries. Most of their teaching experiences, nationally and internationally, had been at high school level, which is referred to as cycle three in the UAE. It was therefore their first time teaching English language learners in a cycle one school. It was noted that these participants exhibited good knowledge of the subject but struggled to convey the subject content to these young learners and also had difficulties keeping the learners stimulated throughout the lesson.

5.4 Research Question 3: Relationship between perceptions, ideologies and practices

The third research question was "What is the relationship between the teachers' ideologies of English, on the one hand, and their actual pedagogical practices, on the other?" (cf. section 1.4). Below, perceptions regarding language and culture are discussed, before turning to the relationship between language ideologies and pedagogical practices.

Language and culture

There is no doubt that in the UAE there are cultural and linguistic differences between the learners and their English language teachers (Palmer, 2015:79). The teachers are often faced with challenges, and potential conflict, between themselves and their Arab learners (Palmer, 2015:78). Palmer (2015:78) and Belhiah and Elhami (2015:7) argue that although English language teachers might be pedagogically fully trained, the effectiveness of their pedagogical practices and methods may be weakened by their lack of skills in dealing with the cultural and linguistic differences between themselves and their learners. With regards to the learners' part in this relationship, Ahmed and Shah (2003:151) suggest that for effective teaching and learning in the target language, learners' attitudes towards the foreign culture are essential, as language is a fundamental part of culture.

The interview data shows that the participants have similar perceptions of teaching English to language learners with a different culture. The results of the data analysis indicate that they have learned to adapt to the learners' culture and language, and to show respect for the learners' culture, and at the same time, they have gained the learners' respect. It was noted that the teachers knew some Arabic and sometimes used the learners' mother tongue to simplify the meaning of English words or of content. In addition to adapting to the learners' culture and to the specific school context, most of the participants were dressed in the traditional wear of the Emiratis most of the time. Along with language, culture is defined in terms of the linguistic and national identity of a particular society (Gao, 2006:59). In other words, if we try to acquire a language without being aware of its culture, communication cannot flow and there might be miscommunications. In fact, it is argued that mastering and understanding the cultural differences between the teacher and the learners in a classroom setting, empowers effective teaching and learning (Palmer, 2015:78).

The study of a foreign language also exposes learners to another culture (Mazari and Derraz, 2015:351). As language is formed by culture, the two are dependent on each other. Learning another language allows learners to welcome another culture and to free themselves from the constraints of their own cultural surroundings, as they learn to communicate with individuals from another culture (Mazari and Derraz, 2015:354).

Language ideologies and pedagogical practices

The beliefs and language ideologies of the participants were partially moulded and directed by the culture of the school as the school was not the only determining factor that influenced

participants' beliefs and language ideologies; other factors include their background and previous language experiences. The participants' interview responses indicate that they understand that keeping English the dominant language in the English language classroom can help learners improve their communicative competence. However, the dominance of the English language was not evident during classroom observations; instead, the observational data indicates that the Arabic language was dominant in most of the classrooms. In fact, only one participant did not use Arabic words or phrases to convey meaning to her learners.

One reason for the high tolerance for Arabic in the English language classroom is the participants' belief that the learners' Arabic culture should also be valued and respected, even in the English language classroom, as this is part of their identity. Another, practical, reason for the use of Arabic was the learners' low levels of English competence, which necessitated the use of their mother tongue. Therefore, even though the participants believed that the English language should be dominant, the learners' English competence simply did not allow them to follow through with this language ideology.

Participants' interview data (what they said) was thus not always in line with their classroom observation data (what they did). However, for the majority of the participants, it was indeed true that their pedagogical practices were closely related to their ideological beliefs about teaching and learning. Notably, these were the teachers who had been trained to teach in the foundation phase and who had many years of experience in the same grade level in their home country or in other countries.

The results show that the participants who only had Grade 8 to 12 teaching experience (in their own country and/or in the UAE) shared the same perceptions, pedagogical practices and ideologies. Their teaching methods were similar in the sense that they mostly used whole-class teaching and mainly worked out of the textbooks. Very few differentiated activities were used during their lessons and they did not make use of a lot of repetition of English words and phrases. However, the results of the classroom observations indicate that communication in the target language was still promoted.

5.5 Suggestions for further research

The study reported in this thesis was limited to English language teachers at one school. Further studies could conduct interviews with English language teachers from different schools in the UAE, and could also interview learners to investigate their language ideologies and their experience of being taught a foreign language by a native speaker of English with a different cultural background.

It is evident that the communicative approach to language teaching was implemented by most participants and deemed to be the best approach to achieve the desired outcomes within this complex cultural linguistic complex. Yet, this approach to language teaching is considered to be most suited for second language teaching. In this regard, this study could serve as a possible motivation towards curriculum adjustments in the future.

As was explained in section 3.4.1, the researcher's collection of observational data was affected by the outbreak of the corona virus pandemic, in that less data could be collected due to time constraints, social distancing and distance (on-line) teaching and learning. Further studies could conduct longer periods of classroom observation.

5.6 Conclusion

This study examined the identities, ideologies and pedagogical practices of English language teachers in a cycle one school in the UAE, with the aim to gain insight into the effect of teachers' language ideologies on their pedagogical practices. Six participants completed a semi-structured interview, aimed at determining their language ideologies and identities. This was followed by classroom observation, aimed at identifying the teachers' pedagogical practices. The researcher observed the participants' attitudes, dress code and interactions with learners and colleagues.

The data was thematically analysed, and the following themes were identified: (i) identities, (ii) ideologies, (iii) behaviour and cultural understanding, and (iv) teaching methods and styles in a new cultural context. The participants shared similar viewpoints regarding the importance of using a communicative approach to language teaching in order to enhance communication in the target language. Their beliefs about appropriate behaviour and cultural understanding were also similar in that they shared the viewpoint that it was important to have

and show respect for the Arabic language and culture. Their teaching methods and styles differed, though.

This study highlights the social significance of intercultural differences and offers first hand examples of how teachers can accomplish this in their own language classrooms. This suggests that these practices could even be shared amongst teachers in an ongoing professional development programme. If a teacher has developed intercultural competence, this will equip them to help learners acquire this type of competence as well.

The findings of this study indicate that there is indeed a correlation between English language teachers' identities and ideologies, on the one hand, and their actual pedagogical practices, on the other. In addition, it was clear that the English language teachers showed respect towards their learners' culture in the school context, and that this seemed to earn them the learners' respect in return. The findings of this study suggest that English-speaking teachers of English in the UAE have positive attitudes towards the learners' mother tongue and its culture, and towards promoting the target language, English, and helping learners to acquire communicative competence in this language. In this way, the study has contributed towards our understanding of the effect of teachers' language ideologies on their pedagogical practices.

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APPENDIX A

Semi-structured interview questions

1. Please tell me about your personal history/biography: where you are from, where you grew up, the languages that you speak and how it came about that you teach English in the UAE.
2. What is life like for you in the UAE? Is it different from the life you had back home? If so, how?
3. What is the role and function of English as a global language? And in the UAE? Does this differ from the role and functions of English in your home country?
4. What are the perceptions of English and English speakers in the UAE? What are the perceptions of English and English speakers in the school context in which you work? Do these perceptions differ from your home country?
5. Please tell me about your teaching. To whom do you teach English? How do you teach it? Why do you teach it in this way?
6. Do you perceive cultural and linguistic differences between you and your learners? If so, what are these differences? Do you address these differences in the classroom, and if so, in what ways?
7. How does the UAE culture affect your identity as an English language teacher? Why?
8. What motivated you to teach in the UAE? Why did you choose to teach in the UAE?

APPENDIX B

Interview data

This appendix contains the transcripts of the interviews with the six participants. In each case, the abbreviations “I” and “P” are used for the interviewer and participant, respectively. Curly brackets are used to indicate an action, e.g. {laughs} or {long pause}. “XXX” denotes that the school’s name or a participant’s name is omitted for confidentiality; in each case, the school referred to is “School X”, the school at which the researcher and the six participants were all teaching at the time of the study.

Interview transcript 1: Participant 1

Date: 8 July 2019

Duration: 36 min. 59 sec.

- I: I am interviewing Teacher A at XXX cycle one school [School X]. Hi Teacher A, how are you?
- P: Hi, good morning, I am fine thank you.
- I: Are you comfortable?
- P: Yes, I am comfortable.
- I: Good. I have eight questions and I am going to start with the first question. So, Question 1: Please tell me about your personal history, where are you from, where you grew up, the languages that you speak and how it came that you are teaching English in the UAE?
- P: Uhh I’m from India and I uhh grew up in the city of Mumbai, uhhh which is uhmm one of the, it’s it’s like the financial capital of India... so uhm I, at home uhm we spoke English, because my parents were educated, and I also studied... my schooling was done in English up to my degree, so I’m comfortable with uhm communicating in English, I never had any issues with that. And uh, I did my degree in science, however when I came to the UAE uhm they wanted me to be flexible with the teaching subjects. It wasn’t like if I’m a graduate in science I have to teach science. So even in my first year of teaching, I have been teaching for the last three years in the UAE, so in my first year I was first offered kindergarten even though I was a middle school science teacher and then in my second year I changed my school and then I started teaching math and science to the primary school and after that I joined this school ... where I was again

told to be flexible, and that's why uhh I teach English and math for uh... Grade 2 students.

I: So, your Grade 2 students... are they mixed? Boys and girls or only boys, only girls?

P: It's mixed. Boys and girls.

I: What is life like for you in the UAE? Is it different from the life you had back home? If so, how?

P: {long pause} Life... is uh... different. Now, since I come from the city uh... it is fast pace for me! Even here as well as back home. So, it wasn't like you know life was lived back at home. However, uhm I don't, I feel like I don't have a social life here. And I do miss my family because my family is back home in India. Ummm like in India it's like you know your neighbourhood, people that lived on the same floor as you in your building as well as you know people who are living in other buildings. You know people around, but over here, I don't know who's my neighbour. Even if I see his face daily, we don't greet each other. So, here, like uh like when I first came to the country, I found it very difficult, I started feeling very lonely, but now I adapted to it and instead I just keep myself occupied in some way or the other and that is how I deal with it. So here I feel uh that there is no social life and I am too much to myself.

I: So, if you say that you and neighbour would walk past each other you know each other. Why don't you greet each other? Is it because of cultural differences?

P: Yes, because I uh I live in Dubai and I stay in a 22-storey tower and there are around six such tower that I stay in, in the same complex. And there is a very mixed nationality kind of community. So it is very difficult and what I observe is people of the same nationality, they tend to communicate with each other and meet each other maybe in the evening, but if you are of different nationality there isn't any bonding. Like I recently saw like one of my neighbours they had a birthday party and uh... I, there are, there are, Arabic people maybe from Lebanon, I'm not sure, however like uh the door was open and I just saw that all the children that came for the party, were also Arabic-speaking, from Arabic-speaking homes... so that is how uh you know people uh prefer speaking or meeting people of their own nationalities.

I: Do you think it is because of language preferences?

P: {long pause} Mmmm... I feel that there is too much of a mix nationality here compare to uh any other foreign country. So... I feel that the people are more comfortable with people of their own culture or nationality.

- I: What is the role and function of English as a global language in the UAE? Does this differ from the role and function of English in your own home country?
- P: Mmmmm uhhh I feel uhh like you know... I have travelled to other countries also. I do believe that English is one language that can connect people if they know the language. Because every country, every region has its own language and it's very difficult to understand what the other person is saying. So yes, English is important as a global language for countries and people to communicate and to have something in common. And uhmmm, well yes English is mix nationality that are there in the UAE. Maybe the language might bring people closer, because even the people that are working in the UAE, whether they come from my country India, many of them aren't educated and they come here just to make money, so yes they also don't know the English language that well. So... and I think it is same with even other people coming from other countries... they might not be that educated, because you can get all kinds of odd jobs in the UAE and you are able to make some little more money that you would make back home, that is how you can save. So... yah English is important in UAE also, because we find it difficult to communicate, like maybe if I go to a store and it's an Indian store and the person does not know how to speak English it's gonna be difficult. I have seen that most of the groceries also, even the Indians are speaking Arabic because you will have Arabic-speaking people also coming to that store. So yes English is important in UAE. Mmmmmm in my home country I feel uhhh you know we have a national language which is Hindi. Now every state has a different language... a different state language and either the person knows the national language or some states... they are very particular about their own language so in, in school also the national languages are not taught. So... in India it's like either you need to know your national language or your state language to communicate. English is not uhhhm you know that important when you, uhhh when you dealing with people in your locality, because they understand your language, whatever you speaking. National or even your state language. But what I have notice is when someone speaks in English, in India it is considered as this person is educated, because we have more English-medium schools and there are state language schools as well, but the ones who can... but you know education is free I think in the yah in the state language schools the education is free or it is at a very uhhh affordable rate for the poor families. So over here English... even if the child is coming from a poor family the child can speak English. It is a sign that the child is well educated.

- I: What you are saying is that English gives the family, or the household or the child a kind of prestige?
- P: Yes... if they can speak English, it is easier for them to get jobs in India or even if they go abroad... yes it is easier for them to get jobs.
- I: What are the perceptions of English and English speakers in the UAE? What are the perceptions of English and English speakers in the school context that your work. And do these perceptions differ from your home country?
- P: Ok. {Long pause} what I have notice in UAE is that there is a part of the local community that is educated and speaks English well and fluently. And there is uhh like you know the older generation that maybe uhhm did not uhmm complete their schooling in English. They must have competed their schooling in Arabic. So uuhm the ones who... I feel that the modern uh hh the modern generation that is you know open to study and some of them also go abroad and study. They are very open to communicate in English and they are able to uhm get along with English-speaking people from other countries. However, the ones who were never exposed to the English language at a young age, they are not open to learning it even now. So, if they did not learn English when they were in school, or even if they were taught, but they could not get any uuuh commander with the language... later on they are not very uh hhh open to learning English. And uhmm the school that I am working in... I have this feeling that the parents don't speak English at home and it is not only speaking. I don't think that they even learnt English before. So these are like first generation English language learners. So uuh it, uuh like see when we teach even young children, if they learn a poem in English and they go home and they... you know they recite it to their parents, their parents will like clap hands and encourage them, but I, I feel that when these children go home even if they will speak a word of English there is no reaction to that. And uhh that is why I think the children don't feel that it is important to speak in English, because they don't speak in English at home and uhh even they don't have much exposure, they do not go out much. They are in their home or in their community. Uuhm so that's why they also don't feel the need to learn English. And... but where as in my country, people who speak English are valued. Uhh like even the older people... like my grandparents... even though I don't speak my mother tongue with them, but when I speak in English they understand what I am telling them. They are fine with me communicating in English with them and they communicate with me in the mother tongue and I understand the mother tongue, but I am more comfortable with English. And they are ok with it. But

over here it would be very disrespectful if someone is speaking in Arabic and you are... like you know... talking to them in English. They want you to learn their language instead than learning English. It's like that.

I: Why do you think the Emiratis want their children to learn the Arabic language?

P: Uhm I feel this culture is such that, uuuuh they are very strict about their ways of living. Uuuuh they are not very open-minded to change. They don't want any sort of change. So, like where as in... uhhhh in India, even though my parents are originally from the South of India, my parents did not study English as a first language in school. Up to school they studied in the state language and it was in their college, uuuh that is their higher education, they were exposed to English. So... uhhhh, please repeat your question, I forgot what you said.

I: Why do you think it is important, especially the older Emiratis, for them to want their children to understand and speak Arabic?

P: Yeah, uhm... ok yeah so, so even though my parents came from the village, still they encouraged their children... because they moved to the city and uhmm, it's like I am sure since they weren't speaking English at home, they must have found it difficult, but uuuh at the workplace... like I always saw that my mother had a small English dictionary with her. She made that effort to learn the language. Even when I went to school, if I could not, like you know... understand the meaning of certain words, my mom would open the dictionary and learn the language along with me. So I felt that the culture that I came from was very open to change. And change in everywhere. It is not only the language, even the way of living. Like uhhhh, the way we dress. My mother does not wear the traditional clothes anymore. She's, uh, she wears like you know more Western outfits. Even I am like that. So it's just that the... the people have to be more open to change. Because, see... the world is progressing, but if you are still, like you know you want to stick to your old ways, it... or, or somehow I feel that there is a fear that the culture might be lost. Yah, so that is why... it's because of the fear that they not very open to change.

I: Please tell me about your teaching. To whom do you teach English? How do you teach it? Why do you teach it in this way?

P: So, I teach English to uhm students of Grade 2. And... like I am new to the school. So I joined in uh, the mid-year. What I have observed is uhm, first of all there are... the teachers who teach English, they come from different nationalities. And, and the previous teacher that was there had a different accent. I have a different accent, so it's

not only uhm the English language, also the fact that the teacher uses a different accent confuses them. The different pronunciation... that confuses them. Uhm... so, they also... another thing that I observe is uhm when I, when I saw the curriculum, or the books, they were way ahead of what the child already knows. And to master the curriculum, uuh they did not have the previous knowledge. So there were, most of the kids lack the basics of English in terms of the letters, the alphabet, they cannot even recognise that. Uuh forget English now... they learning, even subject like math and science in English. So, for them... those subjects become even more difficult. Because they just don't know the basics of English at all. So they struggle more with writing. Since they don't know the alphabet, even if you are telling them the alphabet... they just don't know it. They struggle with writing. So if they can't write the alphabet, they are going to struggle with the words. So as a teacher, what I felt is, I must focus first on what they can do. What is easier for them. And... uuuh it is proven scientifically, that a child learns language first through listening and then speaking. Even if a child is at home, they don't learn writing first. They first listen to their parents speaking and that is how, you know, start using the language. And like writing comes much later. So my focus as a teacher is to make them listen and speak the language first. So I use uhm more of songs to teach them words, because words... if, if we were just like reading words, it's gonna be very monotonous, and they cannot identify the letter anyways. Even if I am teaching the letters, I teach them in a multisensory way like where we use action. Like, even if they are learning the letter A, I make them draw the letter A in the air. So, it's, it's more of you know them using all their senses and uhm learning through movement as well as sound as well as uhm... you know speaking. So basically a multisensory and a fun way, they should not feel like you, uuh, the teacher is teaching something. So they should feel like they are having fun and then they will enjoy it more.

I: You said previously that you have worked as a kindergarten teacher. So, do you use some of your KG strategies in your Grade 2 classroom?

P: Yes. I do. So even uhhm like... if I, if I, come to a class, it's not like I will just start with the lesson. I do have a circle time in the morning. Where we uuh just have a general conversation about how they are, what they did during the weekend, or if there's something that they want to share with me. So we do have that time. As well as, you know in kindergarten we had something called a toy talk. It's when they bring their favourite toy from home and they just speak about it. So that is also something that

helps with learners who are not confident in speaking, 'cause first you need to get the confidence to speak.

I: So you do use any conversational or communicative strategies in your classroom to encourage them to speak?

P: Just repeat your question.

I: Do you use any conversational or communicative strategies in your classroom to encourage or motivate them to speak?

P: Mmmm... like if I ask them a question, most of them are uhm, you know, afraid to answer. So even they give an answer that is completely wrong. Like supposedly, I am giving them a point. I will give them a point just for opening their mouth and speaking. So that has helped at least to be confident and make an effort.

I: Do you do error correction, do you tell them how to use the sentence properly. How do you deal with error correction?

P: At this point I don't do it. Yah, yah at Grade 2 I felt that uhm it's not going to help, because uhm I think it's just going to demotivate them. So that's the reason why I don't do it, as long as... whatever they are saying is something that I understand or someone else understands. See, we need to understand that communication is all about understanding each other. So if they achieve that, if they are able to communicate in a way that I understand what they are saying. And it's the same with me... I as a teacher should be able to communicate in a way that my children understand. Even if I have to say it in a wrong way, but if they are understanding, then I have made progress.

I: When you speak to your children, to your learners, do you use basic English? Do you try to simplify the words or simplify instructions? Is it basic or do you use a standard form of the English language?

P: I... it has to be basic. As well I try to speak slowly and clearly. Maybe sometimes I have to repeat what I said. Sometimes I have to show an action to make them understand what I have said. But uhm, I have to make sure that they understand everything that I say by using different strategies.

I: Do you perceive cultural and linguistic differences between you and your learners? If so, what are these differences? Do you address these differences in the classroom, and if so, in what ways?

P: {long pause} now if you see the language, the language that they speak. I feel it's a more... it has a different tone. So sometimes the way we speak English... just the tone in which we speak is a little offensive. Like when you translate an Arabic text into

English. Like even... uhm you know the questions in math, for example, “Emma went to the supermarket and bought...” like if the text is something like that. But when it is an Arabic text it will start with “my friend”. You know... so they address people in that way. They like when I am addressing you, I will just call out your name, but in their language, they address people as “my friend”, “my brother”, “my sister”. So... uhm, so, so somewhere when we are using English you need to keep that in mind. Because whatever you say in English they don’t understand it directly. They are actually translating in their head to Arabic for them to understand. So... uhm, that’s why when we talk in English, we need to change our ways of speaking to them. Uhm, also they are more comfortable if you sometimes use the Arabic words instead of the English word. So if there is a need to do that... sometimes, I do, do that. I use both, the Arabic word and the English word. At least they know the relation between the two. Cultural differences... also yes, in terms of... you know everything. Even the food... like they notice the kind of food that I bring for lunch. And they look at it and they make faces at me... “Ms, what you are eating is not good”. And they feel that what they eat is good and they see that I am eating is not good food. Uhhh, also the way I dress, I don’t wear the traditional clothes of their country, so yes they do notice that. And uhm, even they notice that, like I’m a lady, so even something as small as... like I wear a trouser, so if I cross my legs and it goes a little up and they can see my ankles, they will point out at you “Ms, pull your pants down, pull your pants down”. So they want everything covered, so they notice that I don’t pay attention to the small things. So these things do make a difference, because... see, see a teacher is someone that a child is supposed to look up to and emulate. But now comes a conflict, because a child cannot emulate me, because they are taught something else back home. So it is difficult for the child to respect the teacher. Because I don’t uhhh dress or I don’t speak the way uhhh... maybe their parents have those kind of expectations from them. So I’m not able to be an example for them like that.

I: So how do you address these differences? Did you address it?

P: I feel they are very young. And uhhh... like once a child asked me, “Miss are you Muslim?” I said “No, I am not Muslim”, so then the next question was... “Oh so you praise Satan”. I said “No, I pray to Allah but I am not Muslim”. Now I don’t go into the depth of it, because it is not their age to understand. So I just don’t go into depth, I focus on the learning and the curriculum.

- I: Do you think that uhm, especially because these learners had English teachers from KG. So they had KG1, KG2, Grade 1 and now Grade 2. So they had four years of exposure to English language teachers, might be from different cultures and from different countries. Do you think that, that teachers' culture is brought into the classroom? And do you think that learners adapt to their teachers' culture?
- P: I think in some way yes, every teacher bring along their culture. If not their culture, basically it's just the way they speak, because uhh like even when I'm speaking to a teacher that's American, even I find it difficult to understand her accent. Sometimes I would ask her to repeat what she's saying. So they are expose to different cultures. But I don't think they are able to embody that, because I haven't hear any child speaking with the accent of their previous teacher. Some where I feel that they are not able to uhhh get the accent and also I feel that if a teacher is coming from a native English-speaking country, she cannot use the same techniques that she used in her country to teach the children here. Like uhhh in the UK they start with phonics... I don't know, maybe that may not work here. So what will work here? So basically we need to find out what works with these kids, because the sounds they use in their language is different. If a child is reading the word "the", the Emirati child will say "thaaa" or uhm if they they have to say the word "park", "I went to the park", they would say "bhark". So, so, so basically the sounds of the language is different. And I have seen even the ones who have grown up and who are educated they still have their own accent and they still make the errors in grammar, the grammatical errors, or the errors in pronunciation. So I, feel that the strategy of teaching has to change.
- I: Do you think that... to be able to have a conversation in English is more important than reading and writing?
- P: Yes. See, what I feel is that we are living in the age of technology, and technology can help in those areas... even if it's reading, even if it's writing. They just need to type and uhhh there is that language correction that works. So I don't feel that... you know spelling the word correctly is important anymore. So I feel, speaking is more important. You need to be more clear with your speech than with writing. Or even with reading, because now there are software that can read for you. So, basically speaking the language and understanding the language is more important.
- I: How does the UAE culture affect your identity as an English language teacher? Why?
- P: Well, I had to adapt more to their culture. Like, as I have said, I have to sometimes use the words of their language to make them understand certain things. Uhm... like even

if I tell them “Put your books in the bag”. They won’t do that, I have to say the word in Arabic for “bag”, that is when they would go towards their bags. As an English teacher, you feel that you should always use the English word, but uhm since that does not work I had to change my way of or my attitude towards communicating with the children. I had to change that completely. Uhm... and I had to be more sensitive. Since I am teaching in a mix classroom of girls and boys, the girls and the boys are very different. So, I might be very firm with the boys but I cannot be very firm with the girls. You know, they just tend to cry sometimes or they get very upset. So, I have to keep all these things in mind while I am speaking to the children. As well as, you know an English teacher is always trying to correct a child, but I had to get out of that habit by correcting the child. If they want to go to the washroom and they say “Teacher, bathroom”, I have to accept that. I can’t say “Ok, you have to say ‘Please may I use the bathroom?’” I cannot expect that from them at this stage. That is how I had to change and adapt as an English teacher.

I: What motivated you to teach in the UAE? And why did you choose to teach in the UAE?

P: Mmmm. Well I actually came to UAE, because uhm, in India, you are teaching students from India, is not much of a challenge. I thought that in the UAE I would have more exposure to different nationalities. So... however in the private schools that I have taught in I was mostly teaching Indian children. And uhm, but over here, I find it... in this school for me I feel that it is a challenge to teach, because I have never taught children who did not speak English at home. So everything... uuuuh the little English that they know, they learnt in school, but when they go back home there is nothing. So this is the first time that I am teaching such kind of children and for me I find teaching English to these children very difficult. Like in my previous school I never had to make an effort to... like when I said a word they knew the meaning of the word, but here when I say a word I have to show a picture or I have to make some connection to it uuh in their language. So this is the kind of challenge that I face. As well as uuh what motivate me is every day I have to do something different. The same thing does not work here. And it is very difficult to keep these children uuh not only motivated but for them to focus on what you are saying. Because the moment they realise that they are not understanding what you are saying they are not interested. So keeping them interested is very challenging for me.

I: Why did you decide to teach English in the UAE?

- P: Uhm... uhm, like even monetary we earn better in the UAE. And the qualification that I have... the Bachelor's in Education I have from India, is only valid in India. It is not valid in any other country but in the GULF. So, if I want to move to another country like Canada or the UK I have to re-do my Bachelor's again. So, the only place I could move was over here.

Interview transcript: Participant 2

Date: 9 July 2019

Duration: 28 minutes

- I: Please tell me about your personal history/biography: where you are from, where you grew up, the languages that you speak and how it came about that you teach English in the UAE.
- P: Uhm, well, my nationality is Indian. I come from India, south of India... that is the historical city of India. I have done my Masters in Botany. I am a trained Postgraduate and I have over 15 years of experience and uhm well I have national and international experience. For 10 years. I have been teaching Grade 10 and 11, that is intermediate. Uhm... I think this is the third time I came to the UAE and uhm I was fresh from college when I arrived over here. And uhm that was also quite a good experience. It's different teaching in this school. Because I was teaching in an Indian school, CBSC curriculum. I do have experience in ITC curriculum in a Pakistani school in Abu Dhabi and well uhm there was one section which was Arabic. Over there I taught English and science, a Grade 4 class. I don't have experience teaching lesser than Grade 4. Only for one year I taught Grade 4. Otherwise I have experience in teaching Grade 10, 11 and 12.
- I: What is your home language in India?
- P: In India... my mother tongue is Urdu and Hindi, but we talk in English at home as well... it is a mixture of Urdu, Hindi and English. But I find myself comfortable... I think. I speak, I read, I write in English. So the medium of instruction there is English.
- I: What is life like for you in the UAE? Is it different from the life you had back home? If so, how?
- P: Well definitely so it is different. Well... uhm there we know everybody. The social life or the interaction with the people is small over there. Perhaps, because here... I don't know anybody over here. Except of course the teaching faculty over here. And few friends. I do have few relatives over here. But I don't go often, because they stay in Abu

Dhabi and Dubai. So, mmm well and uhm here we find that... uhm... everybody is busy over here. In fact, I wanted to go over the weekend to meet my relatives, but they wanted to like relax or you know they want to chill at home {laughs}. Or they want to go out with their own family or with their own friends. I would really love to go my relatives, but they also want to relax. Because here, the stress is more in the jobs we are in. Everybody... uhhhh they like to enjoy with their own family and with their circle of friends. So I try to avoid {laughs} unless they invite me, then only I will go. So it is different and there's many other difference like over here I don't have any Arabic friends. From my previous school, the ex-colleagues I had, they were Arabic, teaching biology and science, they were very cordial and very warm. They did invite me, but I didn't go. Uhhh... perhaps like uhm different culture, I was a little bit nervous in going.

I: Because of the cultural or language differences?

P: Maybe both. A little bit of both.

I: What is the role and function of English as a global language? And in the UAE? Does this differ from the role and functions of English in your home country?

P: Well, English is definitely a global language. It is the window of the world, it is the way we communicate, it is simple, it is easy, it is understood... by almost all the people of the world. In our country, specifically and in the UAE also, the medium in which we can convey from people of different nationalities is through English mainly. Uhhmm and of course we find that... uhm back home we find that most of the people know English. So it is very easy to communicate, even though the national language is Urdu and Hindi and we have our state languages, but nowadays English is very common, everybody knows it over there. But here, I find that uhm uhm English is well spoken by other nationalities, very fluently, rather than the Arabic... the local people over here. Though the educated ones... the teachers they know how to speak in English, but the students... I find that they find it very difficult to convey and or to understand as well... and to speak English. I am finding it very difficult uhm... to explain to them. I feel sometimes very handicapped... I wish I have known the local language in order to make them understand what I am trying to say. I take sciences and there many definitions and terminologies uhm which I feel I could have conveyed more better if I had known their language. Uhm or at least if we had AEMT [Arabic English-medium teacher] teachers who can explain to them what we are trying to convey. That is what I feel.

I: Why do you think after three years of English, KG 1, KG 2, Grade 1, when they come to Grade 2 their English is still not that good?

- P: Basically speaking, they should learn to speak in English more so. But they are speaking Arabic in the classes. And they are speaking to us also in Arabic. They mostly converse in the local language. Uhh preferably, I always tell them in the class... in order to learn any language you have to speak only {laughs} ... in fact once I told them I am going to give them extra points if they only speak in English. I wanted to motivate them in speaking English, because it is good for them. Despite of being expose to English in previous grade... back home the parents... you know... also need to talk in English. Of course your mother tongue is your mother tongue, you learn it and you won't forget your mother tongue or your national language. But English... since it is not their mother tongue, their parents back home they should instil in them the interest and uhm the feeling, motivation and love for the particular language. It will be easier for the children. We find that almost all the literature is in English. And in future it will help them if they want to go abroad or even if they want to continue with the studies. So the parents... uh uh we need the involvement of the parents. And over here I do not find. Parents again and again they should come, they should be accountable and they should be involved more so. And uhm you know the teaching learning process. We as teachers and them as parents... together we can and we could it is for the benefit of the child so we need the help, the cooperation
- I: What are the perceptions of English and English speakers in the UAE? What are the perceptions of English and English speakers in the school context in which you work? Do these perceptions differ from your home country?
- P: I find that the perception of English and English speakers, that we have uhm regarding the pronunciation... the accent, uhm, we find that for us it is very easy to converse in English. And we assume that the person in front also can at least understand. We are using very simple vocabulary, very simple English. But still we find that uhhhh specifically me in particular, I find it difficult to convey what I want to convey in class, because of the lack of understanding of the English language. Uhm and uhm I find that they should be a little bit more obedient. So that they can learn and speak better in English. It is only for their own benefit so that they can at least start a dialogue, whether they commit grammatical errors. We can correct their grammatical errors afterwards. And there's always an initiative... we find that the initiative is not only coming from the student itself, but the parents they should uhh instil in the children that they should also speak English at home. So that the perception will change you know. There is no uhm two opinions about it that they need to be more protective or possessive of their language

or culture. Because their language, their language... they are born with it. Each country has its own culture, has its own way. I mean, whether it is Chinese or Russian or Indians, we carry with us our own perceptions, our own whatever... pronunciations and accents. But at the same time, at least we should make an initiative. I feel that they should change their attitude and perceive this as for their own good.

I: Changing attitudes from parents or from the learners? Who do you think play an important role?

P: Initially it should come from the child itself, and they can convey this to the parents as well and tell them at home. Because most of the parents might not be educated here and uhm... they don't know how to speak in English and they don't get any background help from their parents back home. So... they as learners can tell their parents that uhm ... to practise with them at home. The parents can learn with the learners you know... there's cassettes, there's YouTube.

I: How does these perceptions differ from your home country, India?

P: Well in India....we find that the parents are more involved. They are very involved and in fact they make it a prestige issue. And you know, they want their child to be first in the class. And uhhhh they will start... Academically, the parents are much more involved.

I: Are you saying that English is more valued in India?

P: Yes. It is much more valued. And it is almost like a first language over there. It is an in thing you know.

I: Please tell me about your teaching. To whom do you teach English? How do you teach it? Why do you teach it in this way?

P: I teach English and science to Grade 1 learners. The medium of instruction is in English. I follow the Bloom's taxonomy that is required and uhhhh I have to come down to their level. And I change accordingly, every day and every lesson. Because each lesson and each situation is different. So, I try... I do differentiated learning, because I find that every student is different. Their understanding level is different. So I try to group them into different groups. That is how I teach, differentiated learning, groups, I pair them sometimes. It depends on the class situation and the subject. Because science is such a subject where you know... it is demonstration that I take. I tell them to do hands on activities. But I find that when I give them homework or revision work they lack in commitment. Because when I ask them revision work, I find that they didn't study or do their homework at home. And who's responsible for this? The parents... the parents

involvement is missing over here and it is a blatant or lack of interest from the parents. I find it very distressing and frustrating.

I: Do you perceive cultural and linguistic differences between you and your learners? If so, what are these differences? Do you address these differences in the classroom, and if so, in what ways?

P: There is a lot of cultural and linguistic differences. Uhm linguistic more so, because the accent is different and they... uh their accent is different, their pronunciation is different. Basically speaking they uhm they get confused with letters. Like if I say to write... they get confuse with a “b” and “d” and most of the letters I found... and pronunciation also, for “p” they pronounce it as “bhh”. So that is one of the major linguistic differences I found. And culture differences, since they are used to seeing their parents, the mother being dressed up with an *abaya*, they expect the teacher also be like that and they are basically small children... the age group that we are dealing with. So that is also part of barricade you know, a psychological barrier that stop them what the teacher is saying to them. They get confuse or uhm they don’t want to accept that this is a teacher and you have to accept her as she is. They should not be influenced by where she comes from, what language she speaks, the background or whatever it is. The main aim should be to learn, whichever country she’s coming from. Basically she’s coming here to teach... obey and respect her. And eventually learn and go, that should be their goal... they are coming here to study, to learn. And no teacher will teach you anything that is against the culture or against basic values.

I: How does the UAE culture affect your identity as an English language teacher? Why?

P: The medium of instruction is English. In the UAE, well we have to more restrained when we are conveying certain things. Because mmm you have to be more careful, because it should not... I mean contradict anything that is against the identity or the cultural heritage of this country. So generally stick to the curriculum. We are bound to the curriculum.

I: And how does the culture affect your identity as a teacher for so many years?

P: I find that we have to more patient and have to more open and accommodating and I try to understand that the hurdles and obstacles they are facing. So I became more patient and I try to come down to their level.

I: What motivated you to teach in the UAE? Why did you choose to teach in the UAE?

P: It is because... well, well I wanted cultural exposure as well as because I thought I had a very long teaching history in India back home, so I thought that I will be teaching

different nationalities. I wanted to jump out and see if I could survive in an international country. So, definitely... I was not only exposed to the UAE culture, but I also taught Pakistani children, Bangladesh students in Abu Dhabi using English as a medium of instruction. And this is the country where we find people of different nationalities and it is near to India. I found that... well they are more uhm... they accept Indians here and people from other countries as well. And I have my relatives here who influenced me. They said it is very secure and monetary it is also very good.

Interview transcript: Participant 3

Date: 8 July 2019

Duration: 22 min. 32 sec.

- I: Please tell me about your personal history/biography: where you are from, where you grew up, the languages that you speak and how it came about that you teach English in the UAE.
- P: I was born in rural Eastern Cape. I spoke isiXhosa until the age of three and a half. Then I learned how to speak English and forgot how to speak Xhosa, because I never spoke it again. Uhm so I speak English and Afrikaans, just English and Afrikaans. English in the UAE... after a lot of applications and rejection, I ended up teaching in the UAE. But mainly because I felt that I am fluent in English, reading, writing and speaking and I would like to share my passion for English to people all over the world. So... here I am.
- I: What is life like for you in the UAE? Is it different from the life you had back home? If so, how?
- P: {sighs} life in the UAE is definitely different to the life back home, uhhh much safer, number one. Most importantly, much safer. Also, we can afford more things than we could afford back home. The lifestyle, quality of life... that is all very different. Uhm seeing more mosques than churches here... that's also very different for me. Looking at how the people dress, compare to how the people dress back home, if you just go out to the mall or in the streets or wherever, everything is just totally different. And hearing accents from all the over the world wherever you go. Every gathering you go to you find that there's people there from at least five or more different countries, never just from one place. Whereas back home we mix with people from one country, one town, one village. And if we have people visiting from, Jo'burg or from Cape Town, it's like

a big thing. Those people get treated like celebrities. Whereas here, everyone is from all over.

I: What is the role and function of English as a global language? And in the UAE? Does this differ from the role and functions of English in your home country?

P: English as a global language is very important. That's another reason why I wanted to apply to work here, because people need to know English. I think it's the most important business language uhm and the most commonly used language of business. And uhm what I have read before coming here, uhm they want their citizens to become more globally marketable... if that's such a word, uhm so they want their children to learn English so that they can compete globally in the future and to promote their country more and for their own economic growth. So, it differs from our own country, because back home people just speak whatever they want to speak and they fight for their right to speak their own indigenous language and they tend to give their own indigenous languages more importance than English. Whereas, personally I feel that English is more important. In South Africa in general Afrikaans people want to speak in Afrikaans and they fight to say that Afrikaans is more important than anything else and that I know, because I taught in Afrikaans schools. I have been the only English-speaking person in Afrikaans schools twice and I was the first non-white teacher in both these schools. And everything in the school happened in Afrikaans and they even had ATKV ["Afrikaanse Taal- en Kultuurvereniging" = Afrikaans Language and Culture Association]... the head quarters in KZN [KwaZulu-Natal] was at the one school where I was teaching. So they did all these activities, they were fighting for their right to keep Afrikaans alive.

I: What are the perceptions of English and English speakers in the UAE? What are the perceptions of English and English speakers in the school context in which you work? Do these perceptions differ from your home country?

P: Uhm, some English speakers are more highly thought of than others here in the UAE. I find people with an American accents tend to have priority or they are given some seniority and the British people and then the Australians and then the South Africans. It seems to be like some kind of hierarchal thing. Uhm the students are very eager to learn how to speak English. I even had some in my class this year who refused to speak Arabic to each other. Even socially, when they were playing or chatting on their own... they would speak English. And they made sure to point it out to me. They said that they want their English to improve, they want to speak English as well as I do. So they would only

speak English to each other. And you get other students though who would fight against it, they're just naturally rebellious, because they feel that their language... it's their country and their language, their language must be more important. Back home, English is taken for granted, especially in Durban where we live. It's just what everyone speaks, no one even thinks about it in a global context or they don't think about it, they just speak.

I: Please tell me about your teaching. To whom do you teach English? How do you teach it? Why do you teach it in this way?

P: I teach English to Grade 2 students and last year I had Grade 3 students. Uhm I have to speak very slowly... most of the time, I have to confess, I speak broken English, because I believe that I need to bring myself down to the student level so that they can understand me. So they speak broken English and I speak broken English; but then I would always correct myself and have them repeat the correct way to say something that I have said in broken English. And uhm just for them to feel more comfortable and if they make mistakes then I correct them also in a very gentle way so that they know that it's ok to make mistakes, as long as they are trying.

I: Do you deal with error correction immediately?

P: As often as possible yes. It's not always possible to do it. Especially if the child is very unsure of themselves then sometimes I won't even correct their errors. Especially if it's a child that doesn't speak out often. And suddenly this child makes an attempt... and it's as broken and twisted. I would leave it just like that. And then I tell the child that I am so proud of them for trying, because I just want to encourage and motivate and build them up and give them that confidence.

I: Do you perceive cultural and linguistic differences between you and your learners? If so, what are these differences? Do you address these differences in the classroom, and if so, in what ways?

P: There are definitely cultural and linguistic differences, because first of all I'm Christian and they all Muslim uhm I can't dress the way that I use to dress back in South Africa. I have to dress to fit in so that's the first thing, so culturally I had to adapt especially the way that I dress. My hair... they get so excited if I wear a scarf, because they feel that I'm trying to fit into their culture, because they all wear scarves, even though I don't tie mine the way that they tie theirs. The all want to teach me how to do it {laughs}. Linguistically obviously yes I speak fluent English and they all speak Arabic. But what's happening is, especially with the children who really really don't understand I

have to talk much slower, I can't speak as fast as I normally do. And then I have learnt a lot of Arabic... I had to do that. For some children, no matter how slowly I speak or how clearly I enunciate every syllable they still don't understand a word, because they have very limited English vocabulary. And in trying to build up their vocabulary I had to learn Arabic. So my Arabic vocabulary is growing as much as their English vocabulary is growing.

I: Do you think that some of your learners are picking up on some of your ways, your culture, and your beliefs?

P: {Long pause} ... yes definitely, uhm sometimes if I get angry I have to calm myself down and then I tend to, not shout at them, but reprimand them either using a Zulu phrase or an Afrikaans phrase. And they repeat what I have said and they love it {laughs}. Their favourite Zulu phrase is "Uyaphi" and in my previous school the favourite Zulu phrase was "Ndabazabantu" {laughs}. They absolutely loved it, because they always in each other's business and I would say, "Stop being ndazabantu". And then they would all say "Ndazababantu!", and this means someone who likes other people's business.

I: Do you think that teaching a language is teaching a culture, especially in this context where you are a Westerner?

P: No not necessarily. But to some extent yes. Uhm... yes, I would actually say yes... I haven't thought of it before. But when I teach English, obviously I teach with a South African accent and South African colloquialisms, because every area that you go to in South Africa people speak English in their own way. So where I come from we speak in this way, Capetonians speak differently, someone from Jo'burg speaks differently and so on. And we all have like different words we use in place of the proper word. So if I teach then I am rubbing off some of my culture onto the children. Uhm... I actually forgot what the other half of the question was...

I: Do you think that the learners are picking up on your Western styles?

P: Definitely, because here they shake hands and as Westerners we hug. And hugging is not something that they just do naturally, but by the end of every year here, I even had the boys hugging me, because they always so sexually aware... the boys on one side and the girls on one side. And the boys always keep their distance. When the boys start wanting to show affection to their teacher, they would start shaking the teacher's hand. They always start by shaking hands and then after a while I had the boys even hugging me.

- I: Because they observed your culture?
- P: Because I hug them yes.
- I: How does the UAE culture affect your identity as an English language teacher? Why?
- P: {Laughs} first of all I speak very bad English, that's why I'm laughing. Uhm... I have to tone down my English all the time. I can't use the words that I would usually use, so I have to limit my vocabulary. I can't uhm use big words. And I have to find a way to find really simple terms to describe things. And I use actions more than words a lot of the time. Especially depending on the level of the child and the child learning abilities and that kind of thing. Uhm, the way I dress, so their culture has affected my dressing style, my speaking style. You have to watch what you say all the time, because you don't want to be offensive. I wear a cross on my chain around my neck and I always make sure that that's tucked in so that no one sees it. Because once or twice when I had a slightly lower cut blouse the children have seen it then they made a big thing out of it. Uhh, I wear *abayas* all the time which is their cultural dress. Something I never ever thought I would do, not even in my wildest dreams back home did I think I'd be wearing a big black tent-looking thing. But that is what I live in, because it's easier to fit in.
- I: And your identity... because you have been teaching for many years, do you find yourself that you had to change your teaching styles? Was it easily adaptable or did you find it a little hard to change?
- P: It was not so difficult to change over, because here I find it easier. First of all you got to use a lot of concrete objects, you've got to use a lot of pictures and visuals and movies and things like that. So for me that was easier because they have all the resources available. Back home I also taught language and I had to make the resources all the time and I had to buy stuff and still some of the children wouldn't understand the second language that I was teaching. Here some still don't understand it, but with practice and repetition it does eventually come to them, but here it's much easier to change over and use a lot of concrete objects, because the resources are readily available. The only thing is back home, I used a lot of magazines and newspapers and here we don't really have newspapers and magazines available. It's not easily available. I have never bought any. And magazines are very limited and most of them are in Arabic if you find any. And also, magazines have offensive pictures in them, especially bikini-clad women. Even someone's whose shoulders are showing, or someone wearing a vest and their whole arm in exposed, I just don't feel right about using that. So that definitely changed in that way. I use a lot more electronic resources than I did back home.

- I: How long have you been teaching?
- P: 28 years.
- I: Do you think that your pre-service teaching had an influence in the way that you have been teaching throughout the years?
- P: Definitely. I'm a college trained teacher. I didn't do my degree at university initially. I have a three year teaching diploma in senior primary, so part of our diploma was learning to make resources and I am so grateful for that. We were taught how to write in cursive and how to print for the student to see. We were told what size to write and how to make wall charts. We used to have workshops at college on how to make wall charts. We had assignments on wall chart making. I mean, back then it seemed silly, like they undermining our intelligence or something, but now when I look back, I understand the importance of having learnt all of that. And I'm using all that now. I mean that's all part of the package of me as a teacher in the UAE.
- I: What motivated you to teach in the UAE? Why did you choose to teach in the UAE?
- P: Honestly speaking it had nothing to do with English and English teaching. It had to do with money, because the salaries back home are a joke. A person can't pay for a house and a car, which are the two most expenses and the children's school fees. There just wasn't enough money to pay for those three, besides the other living expenses. So, when I thought about my children having to go to university, I like for them to be in Model C schools uhm where the class sizes are smaller so that they can learn better. I realized that there was no way I could stay in South Africa and be comfortable I had to leave my comfort zone and just go to a foreign place, because the foreigners were willing to pay me more. So that was my biggest motivation. Secondly, I do love teaching English and I am very passionate about the language and I love teaching other people.
- I: What do you think about the communicative strategy? In this context do you think it's more effective than grammar correction or error correction?
- P: Communicative is the most important and I think that, that should be the first outcome on the list of outcomes. It's to teach the children to be able to communicate, but in fact in South Africa when I taught Afrikaans, the main outcome was to teach them to communicate in a second language. Just to be able to converse, even if it's not fluently, as long as they can understand someone who speaks in that language to them from anywhere.

Interview transcript: Participant 4

Date: 9 July 2019

Duration: 28 min. 50 sec.

- I: Please tell me about your personal history/biography: where you are from, where you grew up, the languages that you speak and how it came about that you teach English in the UAE.
- P: OK... I am from South Africa, Wolseley, a small town in the Western Cape, I also grew up in Wolseley. Uhm I speak Afrikaans and English and I do speak a little bit of German. And the reason... how it came about that I teach English is... uhm... I love the language and uhm... since high school I love the language and then I just majored in it and tried my luck.
- I: What is your degree?
- P: I have a diploma with majors in English and Afrikaans. And I taught English to high school learners, Grade 8 up to Grade 12.
- I: What grade are you teacher at this school?
- P: I am teaching Grade 3 math and English and last year I taught Grade 5 English.
- I: So what is the difference teaching English to high school learners and primary school learners.
- P: Huge... huge, huge, huge, huge difference. In high school you don't need to guide the child too much. The child comes to you. He has a background in the language, he has knowledge of the language. But when you... when you... at primary school uhh, it's totally different. You have to teach the child from scratch. Coming here to this country is like totally different. They not even on primary level. They like... uhm Grade R, not even knowing what is happening at school, not even knowing the language. Even though in the Grade 3, Grade 5, they still don't know the language, they still don't understand and it's as if they don't want to understand.
- I: What is life like for you in the UAE? Is it different from the life you had back home? If so, how?
- P: I love the life in the UAE, it is different. Uhm... number one, there's no crime... and if there's crime it's minimal, less than minimal. Uhm, I like my lifestyle at the moment, I couldn't have my lifestyle in South Africa, I couldn't just go to a shop and just buy. Whereas here I have money, I can buy, I am able to. And uhm... OK... when it comes to crime. I can feel free to get into my car and go somewhere. Whereas in South Africa,

you cannot just get into your car and go somewhere. You must be prepared, you must prepare yourself. Your tyres must be right, your car has to be serviced, because your car can't break down... uhm along the road. But here, you just get in your car, you uhm... the difference is also I have a new car here, brand new, where in South Africa I couldn't even afford a second hand car. I had to buy a third hand car {laughs}, here I can afford a brand new one. And, as I have said... moneywise, it's totally different. In South Africa you struggle, you can't afford a car, you can't afford a house. If you want to buy a house, they won't give you any uh uh discount or nothing... just because you're a government worker you have enough money. And even for my children... that is what I hate... the school fees. School fees was so, so much, that my whole salary basically went to school fees. It was like house, car, school fees. And uhm, yah... you don't have enough money to live on back home.

I: What is the role and function of English as a global language? And in the UAE? Does this differ from the role and functions of English in your home country?

P: OK globally, I feel it's very important for everyone to understand the language. According to me, it's a universal language. Uhm, everywhere it's being taught as a second language... OK... not everywhere but in... basically globally, it's being taught as a language at school. In the UAE, according to them it's important, because they want their people to excel. They want their people to get into leadership positions. And they want to push out the Westerners and let their people be the ones leading. However, their children... they are not that much interested in the language here in the UAE. Even the grown-ups... I find my colleagues... people anywhere, at the bank or wherever, people... they don't actually want to speak English. Uhm, they would ask someone to translate. Even one day I broke down and there was a policeman nearby, and there were two and I spoke to the one and he just... I mean he's a policeman, he's suppose to speak English. I talked to him and he just told one of his colleagues, "You speak". They don't want to speak the language. Uhm, in South Africa, and that is something I really appreciate of my country, uhm English is a very universal language. English is the language in South Africa. And what I appreciate is that our language... English is being promoted so much in all the schools that all the people that don't English as a home language can actually excel, because is so much promoted, so they can actually excel in their second language. Even if English is their second language, they are on first language level.

I: Do you think being able to communicate in English is important?

- P: Of course, it's very important. Uhm, I feel that knowing grammar, knowing all these academic things of English is not as important as speaking. Just understanding, just communicating with someone... uhm, in English, that's the... that's the most important thing.
- I: Do you think correcting your learners immediately is effective? Or being able to communicate with you as their teacher, is that enough?
- P: In this country, I feel I shouldn't concentrate that much on grammar. They are not on a level where they suppose to be at. So just the mere fact that the child is trying to communicate, uhm, that tells me that the child is trying to communicate and you can still correct him grammatically, maybe in future, when he's a little more confident. But if you correct the child from the start that child is not going to feel free to speak English. Uhm, he's going to think about "My grammar is not correct, so I don't want to speak English, because people are gonna laugh at me". But if you allow the child to become confident first and then help him with his grammar, that would help.
- I: What are the perceptions of English and English speakers in the UAE? What are the perceptions of English and English speakers in the school context in which you work? Do these perceptions differ from your home country?
- P: Definitely, my home country is... we are more open when it comes to English. We are more acceptable when it comes to English. We try much more to do the language. Because we know, because there are so many languages in our country, there has to be a universal one that we can use in order to understand each other. Whereas in this country I perceive that people don't see English as that much of importance. Maybe just not people I think the children. Even the grown-ups, my colleagues... some of them just refuse to speak to me. Other people they will speak but the, the... their communication will be in such a way that I won't even understand them and I think that some of them, because they are so young, they did learn English along the way. They did learn English, but they not confident they, they just don't, they don't see the importance of speaking English. Because I mean... maybe they think that English is inferior and that Arabic is superior, maybe they feel that. But, yah...
- I: Why do you think it is like that? Taking in consideration that the goal for the country is that all of their children would thrive globally when it comes to English. Why do you think that the children don't perceive English as important, based on what you have said?

- P: Overconfident when it comes to their language. They feel that Arabic is... uhm, these people here have a pride. They are very proud of their culture, of their country, of their religion and I feel maybe they feel that their language is supposed to be also a universal, like in a global language where everyone also understand and speak Arabic. Because they are superior. They are *thee* culture and they are rich, and they feel that because you not Arabic, you less of a... basically less of a person because you are not one of them. And I feel they, they, they feel that Arabic is supposed to be the global language. And uhm there they have it so wrong, because Arabic is just a mere language that very little people globally speak.
- I: Please tell me about your teaching. To whom do you teach English? How do you teach it? Why do you teach it in this way?
- P: Oooh... {sighs} ... OK, I teach English to second language learners. Uhm, at the moment I am struggling a little, not just because I am a high school teacher, because these children they are lower than the grade that they are supposed to be in. If I say they are in Grade 5, they actually in Grade 1. So that makes it difficult because I didn't specialise in foundation phase. And I feel when you want to come teach here in the UAE, you have to be a primary school teacher. High school teachers... you... you, you, if you want to apply here, if have to apply to a university. But, according to me everyone is supposed to know primary school teaching. Uhm, I have learned to change my method of teaching. Uhm, in the past, because I'm a high school teacher, I left a lot of work a lot of... I didn't guide as much the students, because of my past. And I have learned that I, I am the one now to guide. I'm not the one receiving the children at high school, I'm now the one that's supposed to teach them here at the foundation about how they supposed to be, how they supposed to learn at secondary level. And, uhm, yah, I tried to change my way of teaching so that it can benefit them.
- I: How many years of teaching experiences do you have?
- P: Now this year it's going to be 19 years.
- I: Was it difficult for you to change your teaching strategies and methods?
- P: Yes, it was so difficult. Because as I've said... I didn't just teach Grade 8. I taught the last grade of school, uhm when you a Grade 12 teacher, you are concentrating not even on grammar, you not concentrating on anything else. When the child gets to you, the child knows everything... so basically you are teaching a university student. A first year university student. Uhm... and that made it it difficult. I was use to the child knows everything, the child can read when he comes to me, the child knows "is" and "are", the

child knows everything. But now I have to even teach the child how to write “I”. So, that was extremely difficult.

I: Do you perceive cultural and linguistic differences between you and your learners? If so, what are these differences? Do you address these differences in the classroom, and if so, in what ways?

P: Definitely cultural and linguistic differences. I come from a background where we speak many languages, we don’t just speak one, we don’t just concentrate on one language at home and at school. Our families have different languages that they are speaking. Cultural wise, these people are... OK, I shouldn’t say “these people”, uhm... back home we are much more open and Western. We are much more accepting of other people, we are tolerating people’s cultures, we are tolerating people’s religion, we are... back home, we, we, we, I would say we are much more friendlier. Then you come here and uhm, you are in a box. People want to put you in a box. People want to enforce their culture, their language, their everything on you. And uhm, because you are... you are in need for what they are offering you, you are willing to put yourself in that box. You are willing to adjust, you are willing to accept, tolerate them. That actually makes you a better person. And then at school in class... also... according to them... the way you speak is a problem. They would see other teachers, they would see American teachers and British people and Irish people, people from New Zealand, Australia... those other people that have English as a native language... they are seen as, for the children they are seen as lesser than the American person. Immediately when they hear the American speak, they see that teacher as a better person, a better teacher. Because of their... according to them, their background. According to them they are much more advance and superior.

I: How do you address cultural and linguistic differences in you classroom?

P: How do I address it or how do I perceive it?

I: How do you address it?

P: {Long pause} Uhm, I... I try to teach them to be tolerable towards other people. Towards other cultures, that is maybe by speaking to them, by giving them a worksheet that doesn’t have just Arabic people in there that has maybe other skin colour or something like that. Just to let them see that the world doesn’t revolve around them, there is life outside UAE. So, uhm I try to do that. Linguistically, uhm... obviously because I don’t speak their language, they, they, they... eh to go on their level. Try to... people say, and I feel it’s so, so... it’s rude saying that, but I have heard that people say that they must dumb it down and I don’t like, I don’t like it when a person says that, because I feel that

these children... it's not their first language, you cannot expect of them to have a perfect manner of speaking... a perfect... you cannot and because they are not... it's not like in our country, in our country children are being bombarded by English. Because they find English everywhere. When they go to the bank... English, when they go to the shop... English. You see someone of another skin colour or race you have to adjust. But here... these people, people they, they are too much concentrating on their own language.

I: Why do think there's still such a big gap between the learner and English language when they have an academic background of English which are enforced in the school from KG1?

P: Because people expect of them to speak the language like it their mother tongue. And it's not. I feel that, because they don't hear English at home. Their mothers, aunty, uncle, no one speaks English. The child is at school for how many hours, and he gets English for three hours, and sometimes he will have an Arabic teacher teaching English, and obviously the Arabic teacher will teach English, math or science in Arabic. Then the child only hears English for two hours. So you cannot expect of that poor child to be so good as uhm... a child that has or doing English as his mother tongue. It's just impossible.

I: How does the UAE culture affect your identity as an English language teacher? Why?

P: {long pause} OK, in our culture we have much more respect and as a teacher a teacher you expect from people and children to have respect. And here, I have realised that as an English teacher in this country, you are not that much respected. Uhm, because you are doing a job, you are being seen as the helper. And it affects my identity, because I'm use to being a teacher, a proper teacher, showing respect, demanding respect, being strict. Here you cannot be strict, here you cannot speak loud... here you cannot do that, because you are not from this country. And that is one of the problems, that's a problem, that's a huge problem and that is why their children do not excel, because they don't have respect, they don't have respect for other people that's not speaking their language. It has affected me definitely. I am much more uh relaxed, it's like you chilling. As I have said, I was teaching English back home. Back home English is being taught like the first language, English second language is being taught like the first language. There's not much of a difference... now you have a certain manner of working. You come here, you have to change your ways, the way you speak, the way you dress, everything you have to change. Because you want the child to know a little English.

I: What motivated you to teach in the UAE? Why did you choose to teach in the UAE?

- P: Ooh, it was my passion, it was my dream. I have always wanted to teach overseas. I always wanted to live overseas and UAE... everyone was just speaking about the UAE... not rich, but you going to have money, you not going to have money troubles. That was one of the reasons why I applied. Basically, because I wanted to travel the world, because I wanted my children to see the world. I wanted a break. And you know normally when you live somewhere else, the change is always good for the soul. I told myself, I don't want to teach for more than 20 years, but now I see that I had my break, I have taught here in the UAE, so I have learned something. My comfort zone is in South Africa, and this is something new. I have learned to appreciate another country, another culture, another life.

Interview transcript: Participant 5

Date: 07 September 2019

Time: 18 min. 20 sec.

- I: Please tell me about your personal history/biography: where you are from, where you grew up, the languages that you speak and how it came about that you teach English in the UAE.
- P: XXX [participant's name] from New Zealand. I am of Maori descent – native people of New Zealand. I grew up in different towns in North Island of New Zealand. I began my schooling in bilingual environments where I spoke both Maori and English; however, as I moved through the education system English became my first language. I moved to UAE in 2015. I came to know about teaching in the UAE through word-of-mouth and have just started my fifth year of teaching English in the UAE.
- I: What is life like for you in the UAE? Is it different from the life you had back home? If so, how?
- P: I find here in the UAE to be very family-friendly. I have so much time for my family and the workload, compared to NZ [New Zealand] work life, is less stressful. I don't spend long hours preparing or planning in my own time as we are given release time every day to be able to complete this.
- I: What is the role and function of English as a global language? And in the UAE? Does this differ from the role and functions of English in your home country?
- P: English is used as a common and general form of communication across the world. Currently, in the Abu Dhabi Emirates, there is a strong focus on teaching English in

schools to better prepare their people for the future. I understand that one of the reasons is help align their education system with the rest of the world so that their qualifications are acknowledged globally – which will allow for more opportunities for their country and people. English is one of our official languages in New Zealand.

I: What are the perceptions of English and English speakers in the UAE? What are the perceptions of English and English speakers in the school context in which you work? Do these perceptions differ from your home country?

P: The perception of English speakers in the UAE is that we have a wealth of knowledge that can be shared with those of non-English speakers. This is the same within schools; however, there are times when English speakers are overlooked when it comes to asking for their advice around organisation or management of school operations as it may be perceived that we are only English teachers and not educational professionals. In New Zealand an educator is valued across the curriculum – we are not just subject teachers but education professionals who are creative and full of ingenuity. There is opportunity for growth and our opinions and advice are sought after. In primary education (cycle one) we do not subject-teach – we all subjects to one class.

I: Please tell me about your teaching. To whom do you teach English? How do you teach it? Why do you teach it in this way?

P: I teach English to Grade 4 girls. I try to foster a positive classroom environment with positive behaviour management – rewarding positive behaviour and managing the less desired behaviour by keeping a 4-to-1 positive behaviour program. I begin an English class with a starter/warm-up, for example, songs, poems, shared reading, games. I then introduce the learning objective and model what I want students to do. I then allow students time to discuss and share their ideas before sending them away to complete their task. I will work with a differentiated group, for example, my lower ability learners completing a differentiated task that still allows them to meet the learning objective. We share, reflect, review our learning at the end. Because our current curriculum is textbook-based and curriculum-centered (not child-centered) I often make notes of areas that we may need to re-visit at a later date as we often have to move on to the next learning outcome outlined in the pacing charts and textbook. I teach a lesson this way because it is the best way I know how to manage the class and curriculum within a 45 minute period. I try to use best practice where possible and try to differentiate to the learners' needs where possible. Some of the learners go home and their parents don't

help them. Sometimes you as a teacher has no contact with the parents to discuss their children's learning or speaking abilities.

- I: Do you perceive cultural and linguistic differences between you and your learners? If so, what are these differences? Do you address these differences in the classroom, and if so, in what ways?
- P: Yes absolutely. The cultural, and religious, differences around clothing, animals, social interaction between genders. Linguistically, there are many differences in terms of sentence structure, grammar, text structure, phonemes (rolled "r" sounds and others). I often find that it is easier to explain English with a bilingual aspect so that the comprehension of new English terms is understood before they can begin to use it accurately.
- I: How does the UAE culture affect your identity as an English language teacher? Why?
- P: I use UAE culture to engage students, for example, clothing, landmarks, animals, phrases that allows students to better understand concepts being taught.
- I: What motivated you to teach in the UAE? Why did you choose to teach in the UAE?
- P: I heard mixed reviews about teaching in the UAE but felt that this was an experience that I need to see through for myself and my family. We wanted to experience something new and show our children a new culture and the UAE offered a great package for teachers to be able to live abroad.

Interview transcript: Participant 6

Date: 09 July 2019

Time: 31 min. 41 sec.

- I: Today I am going to interview teacher E. That's also a teacher at XXX [School X]. For how many years?
- P: Four years.
- I: Please tell me about your personal history/biography: where you are from, where you grew up, the languages that you speak and how it came about that you teach English in the UAE.
- P: I am from South Africa. I am 51 years old. I was born in what now known as Zonnbloem, but formally District 6. I grew up there until I was about 11 and was

forcibly removed to grow up what is known as the Cape Flats. I grew up being raised as English but my parents came from an Afrikaans background. So most of my extended family were Afrikaans-speaking. And myself and my brother were the only English-speaking amongst the cousins. So I think... coming from a background where there is different languages, I learned to acquire a second language before I even got to grade school. I could speak both English and Afrikaans very well because I was exposed to it. Uhm, but it was also... English was being seen in my family, I don't know if it was just my family or in general, like oh they are English-speaking so they live better, they dress better... that was the perception amongst my cousins and they go to a posh school, so almost like keep our distance from them. Like they treated us differently, the family treated us differently. Like the aunts would make more of us and so we were seen as... I didn't grow up arrogant... but I could see as a child that the second language, my second language Afrikaans, were seen as inferior compare to English.

I: How did it come that you are teaching in the UAE?

P: I taught for many years. My first permanent job, I taught in an environment where children came from all kinds of backgrounds... traumatised backgrounds. And uhm, also lots of cultural differences, language differences and I grew as a teacher. Having to adapt what I was taught at you know, during my studies and having to be in a classroom where had to speak different languages in one day, even though I was the English teacher. I had to know a little bit of isiXhosa, I have to know a little bit of Afrikaans, I had to know even French words or sometimes other African languages which I was never exposed to in order for me to connect with my learners. And how I came to teach here in the UAE, I have given 19 years of service and I just felt I needed to grow, I needed to move on. I felt that I have gain so much in that environment and I wanted to expose myself to a different teaching environment. And I knew that from the background I came with, teaching in a... not exactly in a foreign language... but being exposed to children of other languages, that I have enough skills to come and teach in the UAE. Whether that... this is completely foreign to which I was ever expose to... Arabic. Arabic I only know from religious studies as a child. Basic Arabic words, and also reading in Arabic. I was taught to read to Arabic, but I was never taught to understand what I have read, so that for me was the challenge coming here. Like I can understand a few words, I can even read a few words, but to actually speak the language. And I think I also hindered myself in a way, because when I came here I was told not

to speak to the children in Arabic, because you are an English teacher. So, I think it maybe made me in a way not to acquire more of the Arabic language.

I: Tell me about your education background.

P: I studied basic primary education, so for kindergarten only. I didn't come here to teach Grade 1 or any other grade, I came specifically to teach kindergarten.

I: What is life like for you in the UAE? Is it different from the life you had back home? If so, how?

P: It's *very* different yes. I'd say, in the UAE I have been exposed to people from other cultures, the way different people live culturally uhm also I feel safer here than I do in my own country. So that for me was a big plus in that I had more freedom as a woman, moving around in the UAE. I never felt threatened to be alone, without having the male backup or whatever. I can just walk any time of the day or night without feeling that my safety is at risk here in the UAE. Also, just going to live in a hotel, going on holidays, that was completely new to me. I learnt to travel by myself without a male companion, which I never would have done had I stayed in my own country.

I: What is the role and function of English as a global language? And in the UAE? Does this differ from the role and functions of English in your home country?

P: I think English is seen as the language that open up the world to you. So people often, what they do to promote that, they tend to let go of their own cultural background, they tend to let go of their language, because OOH Arabic, Afrikaans or whatever language is not seen as good anymore, only English. So a lot of the basic principles of language gets put to the back side, because now we need to learn English. And yes it does open up the world to you, but you are forgetting your roots in a way. And you know, forgetting the rules of grammar, forgetting the rules of all kinds of things. It can have its benefits, but it also can be detrimental to the younger children.

I: So, in the UAE, in your opinion how do the learners and the people in general perceive English as a global language?

P: I think they see it as opening the world to them and that's great. Because it exposes their country, it exposes the world to something different and they are tolerant of this. And their people who are not expose to English because of the language being English, the older generation learns from the younger generation.

I: Do you think that the older generation are more open to speak the English language.

P: No, because I think for them it's so foreign. I feel the older generation feels that exposing children to the West, they forgetting their values, their roots, their culture. So

anything that's foreign and takes away from their culture is like a no-no. The kids again are open. Because kids are like sponges, they want to know, they want to learn. And they try, kids are always trying. I think the older generation are slowly warming up, but it's going to take another two generation before it's fully acceptable that *this* is the way forward for our country.

I: Do you think that by learning a new language is learning a culture?

P: Uhm... yes they are learning a different culture to their own. Which could be enhancing to their own culture, but it needs... I think guidance from the older folks. I give you something you, but do not forget your roots, and I think that a lot of people are forgetting to also teach the children that yes, I am giving you this opportunity for English, but do not forget your language, your culture, your roots.

I: Do you think culture is important for the Emiratis?

P: For them yes. Because they such a young country and even being expose to English in such a short time, a lot of the older generation feel that they are losing their cultural heritage to being exposed to English. Almost like they are in denial. And I have experienced this, in my own country too. In that, especially in the African languages, parents want English for their children, but it came at the risk of the culture. Because they saw English as better than... and the African language as lesser than... So I am going to forget the cultural practice of how I am going to address an elder, am going to forget the practice of how I am going to dress when I go to a funeral uhh how I dress when I need to go to a wedding. For example, in some cultures you do not look at your elders directly in the eyes, it's seen as disrespectful. Whereas in the English culture you need to make eye contact. So for the child it's confusing, it's confusing. So what do I take on? It's difficult to marry the two cultures and find a common ground. So...

I: What are the perceptions of English and English speakers in the UAE? What are the perceptions of English and English speakers in the school context in which you work? Do these perceptions differ from your home country?

P: I work with very young learners, so it's very difficult... Like I said in the beginning, uhm, English is seen as now it's going to open up the world. Globally things will get better for you if you speak English. So, it, it... the language is almost seen lesser than... even though the elders are making sure that you will respect your culture, you will respect you language, they are almost resistant of wanting to speak English, because that's their way of holding on to the culture and holding on to the language. And that should be obviously commended, uhm I think what needs to happen is there need to be

this constant... like yes there is English, but we cannot forget our culture, we cannot forget our Arabic and we need to put the mother tongue on a higher level than the... second language. Almost promote the mother tongue, especially because I work with the younger learner. When I came here it was said “Speak to the child in English!” Uhhm, I can do that, but they not going to respect me, because they don’t understand me. But if connect with them within their mother tongue, even if it’s one word, two words, I am going to get a better response as opposed to me just throwing English at them, throwing English at them. And I have said this many a times and I have experience this in my own country as well... especially with young learners... *Promote mother tongue first*. The second language falls into to place faster once the children are grounded in their mother tongue first. If you want to introduce a second language... ya they say make it early, children are sponges... *Yes* it can be so, but if is going to come at the cost of your culture... then that could be like a sword of damages hanging over your head. Or I would say for the younger learners, 0 to three or 0 to five or even six years old immerse the children in their mother tongue. Children need to learn the second language together with their mother tongue. For the second language to come on board faster... you *got to* promote the mother tongue. Because the child’s initial concept is that he is going to learn in his mother tongue first. And that is how teach too. I do not tell the child “This is green, this is green, this is green.” The child won’t understand, this is foreign... but if I give the Arabic word for “green” and use it together with the English word for “green”... before the end of the week they should know the English word for the colour green. And I find that, that is how the children back home acquired the English language so much faster. Even the stories our children were exposed to, the books were in the three languages that was prevalent in the class... so English, isiXhosa and Afrikaans.

- I: What do you think are the perception of English and English speakers in the school that you teach in?
- P: It’s difficult to say because for me... English is perceived as probably the better language. And some also see it as “I don’t want to learn it, because it’s too difficult so I am just going to pretend that I don’t hear you or I don’t understand you”. But it’s requiring too much effort for the brain to switch and translate. And also the culture of the parents... how open are the parents? The children learn from their parents. If the child sees that the mother or the father is not making any effort to learn the language, they are not going to make any effort to learn or speak the language. They going to think

that they don't need to speak the language, because they are not going to need it. So why should I learn it? So there's that barrier... this is what I see in the public schools. I had the advantage of teaching in a private school here in the UAE. And the perception in the private school is way different.

I: Why do you think that is?

P: {Long pause} I think because where I am now, it's almost seen as a lower economic group and there we had more professional people. You had parents who were doctors, you had parents who were lawyers who were exposed to the English language and they wanted the best for their children. So they put more effort into their children to acquire the English language. Which meant that if they needed to get a tutor to help they would do that. And, and it was seen like you need to know English, because it's going to open the world to you. Whereas here, it's almost like they don't really need to know the English language. The children only hear English at school, and in the public school I find that my learners struggle more than my learners in the private school. My learners in the private school flourished.

I: They flourished in terms of communication? Reading or writing in English?

P: In terms of language acquisition and communication.

I: Do you think that communicative strategies are more important than grammar teaching?

P: Most definitely communicative strategies. Most definitely. You see, once a child immerses in communication, grammar falls into place later. You can learn about a full stop or whatever... I need for you to tell me what are your needs. "I need to go to the bathroom please." "I am hungry." I just need for them to communicate. So therefore, like things like songs and everyday things where they are hearing the language is so important. The language needs to go with an action, especially with the younger learners, like songs, rhymes ...

I: Please tell me about your teaching. To whom do you teach English? How do you teach it? Why do you teach it in this way?

P: I teach language to Arabic learners, uhm I'm here primarily to promote English. But obviously there's other subjects that go with it... the science and math... teaching it through English. But the concepts are too difficult for the children. Whereas if I just did ordinary communicative type of language acquisition the children would flourish more. That's exactly where I have seen the difference, I've always said to my administrative staff that... {long pause} you know we always teaching the children via a print rich environment, and we always have like there's the Arabic word, and there's the English

word ... I commend that because that is how I use to teach back home as well. The difference however is that yes there's the English word and there's the Arabic word, but it limits me as a teacher because I am not allowed to use the Arabic word. Whereas in my teaching before I used both. Even though I'm told not to do that I find that this is what works for me. When I have observations I try to keep it the way they want it, but I know that my learners learn faster when I marry their mother tongue with the English. And I keep on doing it but I also have to show other kind of data... which I do... but for myself when I want to see my learners flourish... that is what works for me and that is what I will continue with even further down the line.

I: Do you perceive cultural and linguistic differences between you and your learners? If so, what are these differences? Do you address these differences in the classroom, and if so, in what ways?

P: I try to be very respectful to the culture. Even though sometimes when teaching language, you got to go beyond their culture so that you can say "that is how you do it in English" or "that is how and what the word means in English". It was difficult, because uhm you have to learn very quick that certain signs that you find uhm not OK, is quite OK to communicate with in Arabic. So I think that you as the teacher have to learn first about the child's culture. And stop enforcing your culture... because again we perceive... because I was raised English. English is the smarter language, but back up, you also have to reach out and learn about another culture.

I: How does the UAE culture effect your identity as an English language teacher?

P: I think for me coming from a Muslim background it makes it stronger, but also there are times that I struggle, because what is acceptable in my county. Because I had to marry my Muslim culture with my Western culture too in South Africa. And it's quite OK, and here... when someone says to me "Inshallah", back home when someone says that to me I will be like "wow, it teaches me grace, it teaches me patience", yet when I came here the word "Inshallah" here it had many different meanings. I found that at times I would actually get angry when someone says to me "Inshallah", even though they might mean it in a respectful way. But I find that the ways it's said what happens with the "Inshallah" doesn't quite go together.

I: What motivated you to teach in the UAE? Why did you choose to teach in the UAE?

P: {Laugh} You know one would come up with the most beautiful reasons why you chose to teach in the UAE... *Yes* I did want to come make a difference, but for me it was personal. I needed to change my situation financially, I needed to just grow as a person.

And I knew... uhm, UAE actually chose me, I didn't choose the UAE, because on my radar was a completely different country. *But* the UAE came as a default... it that I applied for a job and somebody said there's a post in the UAE. So here I am, four and a half years at this school, but six years in total in the UAE.

APPENDIX C**Classroom Observation Form**

Teacher:

Subject: English

Date:

Observation section	Field notes/comments
1. SUBJECT MATTER CONTENT (teacher shows good command and knowledge of subject matter; demonstrates breadth and depth of mastery)	
2. ORGANIZATION (teacher organises subject matter; evidence of preparation is thorough; states clear objectives; emphasises and summarises main points, meets class at scheduled time, uses technology in the classroom)	
3. RAPPORT (teacher holds interest of learners; is respectful, fair, and impartial; provides feedback, encourages participation; interacts with learners, shows enthusiasm, encourages learners to interact with each other in the target language)	

Observation section	Field notes/comments
<p>4. TEACHING METHODS</p> <p>(teacher uses relevant teaching methods, aids, materials, techniques, and technology; includes variety, balance, imagination, group involvement; uses examples that are simple, clear, precise, and appropriate; stays focused on and meets stated objectives, uses a variety of effective feedback techniques that includes clarification requests, repetition, recast, explicit correction and non-verbal cues)</p>	
<p>5. PRESENTATION</p> <p>(teacher creates a classroom environment conducive to learning; maintains eye contact; uses a clear voice, strong projection, proper enunciation and uses standard English that is on the learners' levels)</p>	
<p>6. MANAGEMENT</p> <p>(teacher uses time wisely; attends to course interaction; demonstrates leadership ability; maintains discipline and control; maintains effective teaching and learning)</p>	

Observation section	Field notes/comments
<p>7. SENSITIVITY (teacher exhibits sensitivity to learners' personal, cultural and linguistic differences, responds appropriately in a non-threatening, pro-active learning environment)</p>	
<p>8. ASSISTANCE TO STUDENTS (teacher attends to diverse students' needs, differentiation, makes use of different teaching strategies, plans for diverse learners' needs based on linguistic abilities and levels)</p>	

Strengths observed:

Overall impression of teaching effectiveness:

APPENDIX D**Classroom observation field notes****Teacher: Participant 1**

Subject: English

Date: 09-09-2019

09:30-10:15

Observation section	Field notes/comments
1 Subject matter content (teacher shows good command and knowledge of subject matter; demonstrate breadth and depth of mastery)	The teacher demonstrated skills relevant to the subject matter and the lesson was in alignment with the objectives which were displayed on the white board. She was well-prepared and had a good introduction to the lesson.
2 Organization (teacher organizes subject matter; evidence of preparation is thorough; states clear objectives; emphasises and summarises main points; meets class at scheduled time; uses technology in the classroom)	The teacher met the class outside the classroom, where the learners were lined up and waited. The classroom rules were given verbally to the learners before they entered the classroom. It was clear that the learners knew the outcomes and expectations. As they entered the classroom, they took out their books and pencil cases, placed it on their desks and went straight to the carpet, which was in front of the classroom. The teacher introduced the objectives of the lesson to the learners and explained to the learners what is expected during the lesson.
3 Rapport (teacher hold interest of learners; is respectful; fair and impartial; provides feedback; encourages participation; interacts with learners; shows	During the introduction of the lesson, the learners were on the carpet and the teacher asked questions. She encouraged and motivated the class to give answers verbally and used constant praise. Few learners were actively engaged during the introduction of the lesson. It was clear that she was building on learners' existing knowledge and skills.

enthusiasm; encourages learners to interact with each other in the target language)	
<p>4 Teaching methods</p> <p>(teacher uses relevant teaching methods, aids, materials and technology; includes variety, balance, imagination, group involvement; uses examples that are simple, clear, precise and appropriate; stays focused on and meets stated objectives, uses a variety of effective feedback techniques that includes clarification requests, repetition, recast, explicit correction and non-verbal cues)</p>	<p>The teacher started the lesson with a short video which was displayed on the interactive whiteboard.</p> <p>The content of the video was directly linked to the objectives of the lesson.</p> <p>The teacher exhibited relevant pedagogical skills relating to the English language.</p> <p>Learners worked in pairs of two.</p> <p>Although learners are not seated in groups, they are seated in rows, they are motivated by the teacher to work with their peer. The dominant language used amongst the learners were Arabic.</p> <p>Learners are familiar with this teaching and learning style, because they know which peer to work with.</p> <p>The teacher communicated clear and was walking around the class to check if learners understand.</p> <p>Verbal feedback was given to learners who completed their work early.</p> <p>Learners were motivated and encouraged to do their corrections; other learners were given manipulatives when they were done with the whole class activity which was in the textbook.</p> <p>She encouraged learners to help each other and constantly motivated them to finish their activities and to ask questions.</p> <p>The teacher used resources to facilitate individual activities.</p>
<p>5 Presentation</p> <p>(teacher creates a classroom environment conducive to learning; maintains eye contact; uses a clear voice, strong projection, proper</p>	<p>The classroom environment felt safe, positive and learner-centered which was conducive for learning.</p> <p>Clear instructions were given, the teacher used a standard form of the English language throughout the lesson when communicating with the learners.</p>

enunciation and uses standard English that is on the learners' level)	
<p>6 Management</p> <p>(teacher uses time wisely; attends to course interaction; demonstrates leadership ability; maintains discipline and control; maintains effective teaching and learning)</p>	<p>Little inappropriate behavior throughout the lesson.</p> <p>The introduction was a bit long and the learners started to get fidgety and restless on the carpet.</p> <p>The teacher maintained the discipline throughout the lesson by using classdojo (online reward system) as a reward for good behavior.</p> <p>Effective teaching and learning were maintained during the lesson.</p>
<p>7 Sensitivity</p> <p>(teacher exhibits sensitivity to learners' personal, cultural and linguistic differences, responds appropriately in a non-threatening way; pro-active learning environment)</p>	<p>The teacher showed great respect to the learners' needs, language and culture.</p> <p>The teacher actively listened to learners' needs and responses, she attentively listened as some learners struggled to give verbal feedback. She then in a respectful manner rephrased the sentence to make sure that she understood what they were saying.</p> <p>She showed a great level of respect to the diversity, language, culture and gender of the learners.</p> <p>Her approach to some learners was firm, but in a non-threatening way.</p> <p>She demonstrated professionalism in dress, speech and in the way she addressed the learners.</p>
<p>8 Assistance to learners</p> <p>(teacher attends to diverse learners' needs, differentiation; makes use of different teaching strategies; plans for diverse learners' needs based on linguistic abilities and levels)</p>	<p>The teacher did not focus much on differentiated teaching and learning.</p> <p>Learners with lower linguistic abilities were given some activities, however it felt to the observer that it was random activities.</p> <p>A gap was noted that not all learners' diverse needs were met.</p> <p>The main resource to teaching and learning was a textbook.</p>

Strengths observed:

The teacher demonstrated in depth knowledge of the subject as well as the curriculum and objectives. She communicated clearly and used Standard English. She built on learners' existing knowledge and constantly challenged the class with questions. She used a lot of picture cards, especially when she did the classroom rules. She used body language to explain certain vocabulary which was assisted by pictures. She used a lot of repetition to reiterate new vocabulary.

Overall impression of teaching effectiveness:

The teacher was engaged in the teaching and learning process. Clear verbal instructions were given to the learners. A variety of instructional strategies were used to promote learning which was maybe only beneficial to the higher achievers. She communicated and gave clear instructions. The textbook was the main resource of the teaching and learning process. The teacher used a basic form of the English language and constantly repeated instructions and asked questions to make sure that the learners understand the outcomes.

Teacher: Participant 2

Subject: English

Date: 19.09.19 11:00-11:45

Observation section	Field notes/comments
1. Subject matter content (teacher shows good command and knowledge of subject matter; demonstrate breadth and depth of mastery)	The teacher showed good knowledge of the subject content matter. However, there were evidence that she struggled to demonstrate the subject content matter to the learners.
2. Organization	The teacher met the class at the door at 11:00. As the learners entered the classroom, she explained to them that she had prepared a small quiz as an introduction to the lesson.

<p>(teacher organizes subject matter; evidence of preparation is thorough; states clear objectives; emphasises and summarises main points; meets class at scheduled time; uses technology in the classroom)</p>	<p>As the learners entered the classroom, it was clear that they did not know where to be seated and they were all over the classroom.</p> <p>After entering the classroom, they were told to look for their names on sticky notes which were pasted on the desks of the groups. The names of the learners were poorly written in small handwriting and it was not legible.</p> <p>Learners struggled to follow this instruction and complained to the teacher that they couldn't see, nor read their names on the sticky notes. This created confusion as learners were running around in the classroom.</p> <p>Although the teacher prepared for the lesson it was difficult to achieve the organizational skills of the subject matter. The teacher did not summarize the main points and there was a lack of technology used within the classroom.</p> <p>The outcomes were written on the board.</p> <p>The outcomes were barely understandable as it was written in poor handwriting.</p> <p>Other than the outcomes on the board there were handwriting all over the white board that did not relate to the outcomes. As the observer it was not clear to see what the objectives for the lesson were.</p> <p>The learners also struggled to understand and grasp what the objectives for the lesson were.</p> <p>The teacher did not give clear and audible instructions as to what the outcomes were for the day or what is expected.</p>
<p>3. Rapport (teacher hold interest of learners; is respectful; fair and impartial; provides feedback; encourages</p>	<p>The teacher struggled to interact with the learners. The teacher used Arabic words and phrases when giving instructions to learners. Dominant language within the class was Arabic.</p> <p>There was a lack of enthusiasm from the learners.</p>

participation; interacts with learners; shows enthusiasm; encourages learners to interact with each other in the target language)	<p>The teacher was respectful and fair, she was dressed in a black abaya (cultural traditional wear).</p> <p>There was little encouragement from the teacher to promote the interaction within the target language.</p> <p>It was difficult for the teacher to convey her enthusiasm regarding the lesson towards the learners.</p>
<p>4. Teaching methods</p> <p>(teacher uses relevant teaching methods, aids, materials and technology; includes variety, balance, imagination, group involvement; uses examples that are simple, clear, precise and appropriate; stays focused on and meets stated objectives, uses a variety of effective feedback techniques that includes clarification requests, repetition, recast, explicit correction and non-verbal cues)</p>	<p>The teacher only used whole group teaching method.</p> <p>The learners had their textbooks in front of them and she displayed the answers on the white board.</p> <p>The answers to the questions in the book were written in a poor and barely legible handwriting.</p> <p>The learners and the researcher struggled to read or make sense of the answers.</p> <p>No questions were answered by the learners, the learners did not get the opportunity to ask any questions or have an open discussion with for example their peers or the teacher.</p> <p>It was observed that the teacher went through her objectives, however it was not clear if the learners' objectives of understanding the subject content matter were met.</p>
<p>5. Presentation</p> <p>(teacher creates a classroom environment conducive to learning; maintains eye contact; uses a clear voice, strong projection, proper enunciation and uses standard English that is on the learners' level)</p>	<p>The classroom environment was conducive for effective teaching and learning.</p> <p>The teacher had strong projection and a clear voice.</p> <p>The teacher's pronunciation was not always clear and untestable. The teacher used a high standard of English words, she did not use English words on the learners' level of understanding.</p> <p>She shifted between English and Arabic words to ensure that learners understand what she is saying or instructing them to do.</p>

<p>6. Management (teacher uses time wisely; attends to course interaction; demonstrates leadership ability; maintains discipline and control; maintains effective teaching and learning)</p>	<p>The teacher struggled to take control of the class and it took her some time to get the learners settled. Thereafter there was still some learners not settled and seated in their right groups.</p> <p>The introduction of the lesson, which was a quiz, was small and the learners struggled with the instructions. The instructions were vague.</p> <p>The teacher did not display the instructions on the interactive whiteboard for the learners to see more clearly. The teacher demonstrated moderate leadership abilities and struggled to keep the learners engaged during the lesson.</p>
<p>7. Sensitivity (teacher exhibits sensitivity to learners' personal, cultural and linguistic differences, responds appropriately in a non-threatening way; proactive learning environment)</p>	<p>The teacher displayed great respect towards the learners' cultural and linguistic sensitivity.</p> <p>It was difficult to observe whether the teacher exhibited a proactive teaching and learning environment, because at times she struggled with classroom management.</p> <p>The lesson seemed very rushed through as the learners were struggling with the learning objectives.</p>
<p>8. Assistance to learners (teacher attends to diverse learners' needs, differentiation; makes use of different teaching strategies; plans for diverse learners' needs based on linguistic abilities and levels)</p>	<p>There were no differentiated activities.</p> <p>It was whole group.</p> <p>The teacher did not attend to the diverse needs of the learners as they were at different levels linguistically.</p>

Strengths observed:

The teacher showed good knowledge about the subject content matter. She had a strong projection and clear voice.

Overall impression of teaching effectiveness:

There was evidence of poor time management and moderate classroom management and leadership skills at times.

Teacher: Participant 3

Subject: English

Date: 10.09.19

Observation section	Field notes/comments
1. Subject matter content (teacher shows good command and knowledge of subject matter; demonstrate breadth and depth of mastery)	The teacher was well-prepared. She had a good introduction and conclusion to the lesson. She demonstrated good insight and knowledge regarding the subject content matter.
2. Organization (teacher organizes subject matter; evidence of preparation is thorough; states clear objectives; emphasises and summarises main points; meets class at scheduled time; uses technology in the classroom)	The teacher was well organized for the lesson. Objectives were written on the white board. It was clear to see and understand what the objectives were for the lesson. At the start of the lesson she had a starter and after that she briefly explained to the learners what the lesson of the day will be and what the objectives are for the lesson. She met the class on time and instructed them to take out their textbooks and pencil cases. It was clear that the learners knew what was expected, because they put their textbooks and pencil cases neatly on their desks and proceeded to the carpet. Technology was used in the form of an Interactive white board as well as the use of internet for a game which was also the plenary.
3. Rapport	Learners sat in a boy then girl and boy then girl pattern. The teacher complimented those learners who sat properly on the carpet.

<p>(teacher hold interest of learners; is respectful; fair and impartial; provides feedback; encourages participation; interacts with learners; shows enthusiasm; encourages learners to interact with each other in the target language)</p>	<p>She used simple words and phrases when she gave out instructions in a respectful manner.</p> <p>She revisited the previous day's lesson and gave the learners classdojo points (online reward system) for attempting with incorrect and correct answers. Therefore, encouraging and motivating learners to perform better and to answer questions in the target language.</p> <p>The teacher enjoyed the lesson and the learners were enthusiastic throughout the lesson.</p> <p>Learners were excited and there was a sense of humor between the teacher and the learners.</p>
<p>4. Teaching methods</p> <p>(teacher uses relevant teaching methods, aids, materials and technology; includes variety, balance, imagination, group involvement; uses examples that are simple, clear, precise and appropriate; stays focused on and meets stated objectives, uses a variety of effective feedback techniques that includes clarification requests, repetition, recast, explicit correction and non-verbal cues)</p>	<p>The text book was the main focus of the lesson.</p> <p>The teacher used good teaching methods, she was clear and concise.</p> <p>She gave sufficient time for feedback and clarification.</p> <p>The teacher displayed the pages on the interactive white board and did whole group teaching by using the textbook. She read the questions and gave the learners time to answer verbally before writing down the question on the whiteboard for the learners to copy.</p> <p>The learners were given verbal cues if they struggled to answer a question.</p> <p>The learners were seated in groups.</p> <p>The teacher used one teaching method which was whole group teaching.</p> <p>There were no differentiated activities to meet the needs of the learners</p>
<p>5. Presentation</p> <p>(teacher creates a classroom environment conducive to learning; maintains eye contact;</p>	<p>The classroom environment was conducive for effective teaching and learning.</p> <p>There was a carpet in front of the class where the inactive board was.</p>

uses a clear voice, strong projection, proper enunciation and uses standard English that is on the learners' level)	<p>The teacher sat on a small chair in front of the learners when she did the introduction to the lesson, which an indication of her classroom routine.</p> <p>She was aware of how she pronounced and enunciate each word.</p> <p>She maintained good eye contact, used a clear voice and the learners listened attentively to her commands and instructions.</p>
<p>6. Management</p> <p>(teacher uses time wisely; attends to course interaction; demonstrates leadership ability; maintains discipline and control; maintains effective teaching and learning)</p>	<p>Time management appeared to be poor in the introductory phase.</p> <p>The introduction was a bit long (15-20 minutes) and the learners started to get figitated and restless on the carpet.</p> <p>The teacher maintained the discipline by using the point system (classdojo) as a reward for good behavior</p> <p>This demonstrated good classroom management and leadership abilities.</p> <p>She was then in control of the class for the entire remainder duration of the lesson.</p>
<p>7. Sensitivity</p> <p>(teacher exhibits sensitivity to learners' personal, cultural and linguistic differences, responds appropriately in a non-threatening way; pro-active learning environment)</p>	<p>The teacher showed great respect towards the learners' personal, linguistic and cultural differences. Some learners were not able to give grammatical correct answers, however the teacher still encouraged them to speak, even if it was just 2-3 words at a time.</p> <p>The teacher was wearing an abaya and a head scarf (cultural traditional wear).</p> <p>One learner wanted to go to the bathroom but couldn't articulate the phrase properly in English. The teacher politely then had the learner repeating after her, "may I go to the bathroom please?".</p>
<p>8. Assistance to learners</p> <p>(teacher attends to diverse learners' needs, differentiation; makes use of different teaching</p>	<p>There were no differentiated activities for the learners.</p> <p>The main resource was the English textbook.</p> <p>The textbook was projected on the white board and the teacher asked the question and wrote down the questions on the board.</p>

strategies; plans for diverse learners' needs based on linguistic abilities and levels)	<p>A gap was noted that not all the learners' diverse needs were met.</p> <p>Learners were on different linguistic levels and learning abilities.</p> <p>The researcher observed that the teacher did not address the different learners' linguistic levels.</p>
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Strengths observed:

The teacher had good classroom management. The teacher showed great respect to the learners and their sensitivities in terms of their culture and language.

Overall impression of teaching effectiveness:

The teacher was engaged in the teaching and learning process. Clear verbal instructions were given to the learners. The teacher used a basic form of the English language and constantly repeated instructions and classroom rules.

Teacher: Participant 4

Subject: English

Date: 08-09-2019

10:15-11:30

Observation section	Field notes/comments
<p>1 Subject matter content</p> <p>(teacher shows good command and knowledge of subject matter; demonstrate breadth and depth of mastery)</p>	<p>The teacher demonstrated good insight and knowledge of the subject matter content.</p> <p>Communication was clear, outcomes were clear and the teachers had a clear understanding of what she wanted to achieve throughout the lesson.</p> <p>The lesson was well-planned.</p>

<p>2 Organization</p> <p>(teacher organizes subject matter; evidence of preparation is thorough; states clear objectives; emphasises and summarises main points; meets class at scheduled time; uses technology in the classroom)</p>	<p>The teacher met the class at the scheduled time. Objectives for the lesson were displayed on the white board.</p> <p>Date, day, month and year was displayed on the white board.</p> <p>Classroom rules were posted on the wall (no pictures).</p> <p>The teacher asked learners questions, learners raised their hands to give the answers. English abilities of learners very limited.</p> <p>Throughout the lessons the teacher highlighted the important objectives of the lesson and reminded the learners of homework which was a consolidation the day's lesson.</p> <p>The teacher used examples, illustrations, or demonstrations to explain and clarify context in text and workbook which were displayed on the white board.</p> <p>Technology was used in the form of an interactive whiteboard and the internet.</p>
<p>3 Rapport</p> <p>(teacher hold interest of learners; is respectful; fair and impartial; provides feedback; encourages participation; interacts with learners; shows enthusiasm; encourages learners to interact with each other in the target language)</p>	<p>The teacher demonstrated good rapport with the learners.</p> <p>Learners were seated in rows at their desks.</p> <p>Learners were eager and showed excitement to answer questions throughout the lessons, most of the time the teacher had to guide the learners with communication.</p> <p>The teacher modeled caring, respect to all the learners and showed excitement when learners showed understanding towards their work.</p> <p>Interaction between the teacher and learners exuded positivity.</p> <p>The ability groups are displayed on the groups on the wall, however this seating arrangement is not displaying within the classroom.</p>
<p>4 Teaching methods</p>	<p>The textbook was the main resource used throughout the lesson.</p> <p>Learners who completes the activity in the textbook were given worksheets to do independently.</p>

<p>(teacher uses relevant teaching methods, aids, materials and technology; includes variety, balance, imagination, group involvement; uses examples that are simple, clear, precise and appropriate; stays focused on and meets stated objectives, uses a variety of effective feedback techniques that includes clarification requests, repetition, recast, explicit correction and non-verbal cues)</p>	<p>The teacher used pictures, interactive white board, the Internet and videos to create visual images to help the learners understand the material and the objectives of the lesson.</p> <p>The directions and instructions were slowly and distinctly executed in order for learners to understand.</p> <p>The teacher checked for understanding along the way.</p> <p>The teacher repeated important outcomes several times during the lesson.</p> <p>She allowed learners to ask questions during the lesson.</p>
<p>5 Presentation (teacher creates a classroom environment conducive to learning; maintains eye contact; uses a clear voice, strong projection, proper enunciation and uses standard English that is on the learners' level)</p>	<p>The classroom was well-organized and reflected an appropriate and effective teaching and learning environment.</p> <p>A simple form of the English language was used by the teacher to explain the work as well as when she addressed learners for specific reasons.</p> <p>The teacher addressed specific problems with learners in an effective manner that did not interrupt the flow of the classroom.</p>
<p>6 Management (teacher uses time wisely; attends to course interaction; demonstrates leadership ability;</p>	<p>The teacher demonstrated effective classroom management skills.</p> <p>Little inappropriate behavior from learners.</p> <p>The teacher maintained control of the classroom through non-confrontational interaction between herself and the learners.</p>

maintains discipline and control; maintains effective teaching and learning)	The teacher maintained the discipline by using the classdojo (online reward system) as a reward for good behavior.
7 Sensitivity (teacher exhibits sensitivity to learners' personal, cultural and linguistic differences, responds appropriately in a non-threatening way; pro-active learning environment)	<p>The teacher showed great respect and embraced learners' diversity, language, culture and special needs.</p> <p>The teacher was dressed in a professional manner as required by the school. She was dressed in a black abaya.</p> <p>The teacher gave positive feedback to learners. She provided learners with words and praises of encouragement.</p>
8 Assistance to learners (teacher attends to diverse learners' needs, differentiation; makes use of different teaching strategies; plans for diverse learners' needs based on linguistic abilities and levels)	<p>The teacher checked learners' work and corrected their work. She gave sufficient time for the learners to do corrections.</p> <p>She constantly moved around the classroom to check the progress of learners' work.</p> <p>A gap was noted that not all the learners' diverse needs were met.</p> <p>The researcher observed that the teacher did not address the different learners' linguistic levels. Learners were on different linguistic levels and learning abilities.</p>

Strengths observed:

The teacher had good classroom management and most of the learners were engaged and active during the lesson. The teacher demonstrated in depth knowledge of the subject as well as the curriculum and objectives. She communicated clearly and used a basic form of the English language. She built on learners' existing knowledge and constantly challenged the class with questions.

Overall impression of teaching effectiveness:

The teacher was engaged in the teaching and learning process. Clear verbal instructions were given to the learners. A variety of instructional strategies were used to promote learning which was maybe only beneficial to the higher achievers. Differentiated learning activities would have

been more effective within the groups. Some learners needed more assistance during the independent activity in the textbook. Group activities would have promoted an effective independent working environment if learners were given work based on their learning abilities.

An introduction to the lesson on the carpet would have been good to observe.

Teacher: Participant 5

Subject: English

Date: 12.09.19

07:30-08:30

Observation section	Field notes/comments
1. Subject matter content (teacher shows good command and knowledge of subject matter; demonstrate breadth and depth of mastery)	<p>The teacher was well-prepared.</p> <p>She had a good introduction and conclusion for the lesson.</p> <p>This was an all-girls class.</p> <p>The teacher presented a high level of expertise and good subject knowledge which linked to her confidence within the classroom.</p>
2. Organisation (teacher organizes subject matter; evidence of preparation is thorough; states clear objectives; emphasises and summarises main points; meets class at scheduled time; uses technology in the classroom)	<p>The teacher was well-prepared and had clear objectives and outcomes for the class.</p> <p>She met the class at the door on the scheduled time.</p> <p>The class was set up and all the activities, materials and resources that she used was packed out on a counter in boxes.</p> <p>Learners knew where they were seated, as they entered the classroom they took out their English textbooks, pencil cases and went straight to their seats. Thereafter they went to the carpet and sat in rows.</p> <p>The objectives were written on the white board and this was verbalized to the learners before they sang the song.</p>
3. Rapport	<p>The teacher showed a great deal of respect to the learners.</p> <p>She motivated, encouraged and constantly praised the learners for doing well and for trying.</p>

<p>(teacher hold interest of learners; is respectful; fair and impartial; provides feedback; encourages participation; interacts with learners; shows enthusiasm; encourages learners to interact with each other in the target language)</p>	<p>She used simple words and phrases when she gave out instructions.</p> <p>The teacher interacted well with the learners and involved them during the teaching and learning process.</p> <p>Learners had to write down the day on the board. Learners were given opportunities to write simple sentences on the board during the introduction of the lesson. This was based on the lesson's objectives.</p>
<p>4. Teaching methods</p> <p>(teacher uses relevant teaching methods, aids, materials and technology; includes variety, balance, imagination, group involvement; uses examples that are simple, clear, precise and appropriate; stays focused on and meets stated objectives, uses a variety of effective feedback techniques that includes clarification requests, repetition, recast, explicit correction and non-verbal cues)</p>	<p>The textbook was the main focus of the lesson.</p> <p>She displayed the pages of the textbook on the interactive white board and allowed for learners to discuss and verbally give answers</p> <p>The teacher gave effective feedback to the learners.</p> <p>The teacher did not use differentiated activities or teaching to meet the needs of each learner within the classroom.</p>
<p>5. Presentation</p> <p>(teacher creates a classroom environment conducive to learning; maintains eye contact; uses a clear voice, strong projection, proper</p>	<p>The classroom felt warm and it was clear that the learners knew what to expect and what the teacher expected from them.</p> <p>Clear pronunciation and instructions were used as well as a standard English that was on the learners' level of understanding.</p>

enunciation and uses standard English that is on the learners' level)	
6. Management (teacher uses time wisely; attends to course interaction; demonstrates leadership ability; maintains discipline and control; maintains effective teaching and learning)	<p>The time management of the class was extremely good.</p> <p>The teacher maintained discipline for the most part of the lesson. She used classdojo (online reward system points) for good behavior and class participation.</p>
7. Sensitivity (teacher exhibits sensitivity to learners' personal, cultural and linguistic differences, responds appropriately in a non-threatening way; pro-active learning environment)	The teacher showed respect towards the learners' personal, linguistic and cultural differences. Some learners struggled to pronounce certain words correctly, but the teacher still encouraged them to speak in the target language.
8. Assistance to learners (teacher attends to diverse learners' needs, differentiation; makes use of different teaching strategies; plans for diverse learners' needs based on linguistic abilities and levels)	<p>The textbook was the main resource of the lesson. When learners were done with the textbook activities, they were then given extra other pages to complete in the textbook.</p> <p>The researcher observed that not a lot of attention was given to allow learners to either work in groups or with their peers.</p>

Strengths observed:

The teacher had good classroom management. She showed great respect to the learners and their sensitivities in terms of their culture and language. She was well prepared, activities were set out in boxes indicating the different ability groups.

Overall impression of teaching effectiveness:

The teacher was engaged in the teaching and learning process. Clear verbal instructions were given to the learners. The teacher used a basic form of the English language and constantly repeated instructions and classroom rules. Constant praising from the teacher motivated the learners to complete either their work or to verbally give answers. During the observation it was evident that the learners were making good progress as a result of clear and concise instructions from the teacher. The dominant language used within the classroom was English.

Teacher: Participant 6

Subject: English

Date: 09-09-2019

10:00-10:45

Observation section	Field notes/comments
1 Subject matter content (teacher shows good command and knowledge of subject matter; demonstrate breadth and depth of mastery)	<p>The teachers demonstrated an in depth knowledge of the subject being taught.</p> <p>Communication was clear, outcomes were clear and the teacher had a clear understanding of what she wanted to achieve through the lesson.</p> <p>The lesson is planned and well-organized.</p>
2 Organization (teacher organizes subject matter; evidence of preparation is thorough; states clear objectives; emphasises and summarises main points; meets class at scheduled time; uses technology in the classroom)	<p>The teacher met the class at the scheduled time.</p> <p>The teacher had a morning routine where she had a brief introduction to the lesson on the carpet with the learners.</p> <p>Objectives for the lesson were displayed on the white board and supported by visual cues.</p> <p>Rules of the classroom were displayed on the wall and supported by visual cues (pictures).</p> <p>Date, day, month and year is displayed on the white board.</p> <p>Ability groups with the names of the learners were displayed on the wall.</p> <p>Ability groups with the names of the learners were visible within their groups.</p> <p>The learners were seated in a u-shape on the carpet. All the learners were in full view of the teacher.</p>

	The teacher played a video to introduce the lesson, followed by reinforcing the rules of the classroom which were displayed on the interactive whiteboard.
<p>3 Rapport</p> <p>(teacher hold interest of learners; is respectful; fair and impartial; provides feedback; encourages participation; interacts with learners; shows enthusiasm; encourages learners to interact with each other in the target language)</p>	<p>The teacher established good rapport with the learners.</p> <p>She modeled care and respect to all the learners and showed excitement when learners showed understanding towards their work.</p> <p>The teacher interacted positively with the learners in their different groups.</p> <p>Each group had different activities ready for the learners.</p> <p>The groups were color coded which clearly indicated the levels of the learners' learning and linguistic abilities.</p> <p>Learners' names in English were displayed within their groups.</p> <p>The teacher thoroughly enjoyed the lesson and there was a good sense of humor between the teacher and the learners. At times she made fun and jokes which made the learners giggle. There was a lot of hugs exchanged between the teacher and the learners.</p>
<p>4 Teaching methods</p> <p>(teacher uses relevant teaching methods, aids, materials and technology; includes variety, balance, imagination, group involvement; uses examples that are simple, clear, precise and appropriate; stays focused on and meets stated objectives, uses a variety of effective feedback</p>	<p>The teacher used pictures, interactive white board, the Internet and videos to create visual images to help the learners understand the material and the objectives of the lesson.</p> <p>She gave clear directions and instruction in a respectful manner. She constantly checked for understanding along the way.</p> <p>Different group activities based on the objective of the lesson was used by the learners throughout the lesson.</p> <p>Learners knew what was expected throughout the lesson.</p> <p>Learners could move to another group if they were done with their main activity within their ability groups.</p>

<p>techniques that includes clarification requests, repetition, recast, explicit correction and non-verbal cues)</p>	<p>Interactive English language stations were displayed around the class, which also served as an activity learners could do when they are done with their main objective.</p> <p>Concrete manipulatives were used.</p> <p>Learners were working in groups and in pairs.</p> <p>The teacher was extremely active during the teaching and learning process with the learners.</p> <p>She worked with the weaker learners in a group and frequently walked around the class to make sure that learners are actively involved during the learning process.</p> <p>She asked questions based on the objectives and activities some learners completed.</p> <p>She provided learners with effective feedback and positive reinforcement throughout the lesson.</p>
<p>5 Presentation</p> <p>(teacher creates a classroom environment conducive to learning; maintains eye contact; uses a clear voice, strong projection, proper enunciation and uses standard English that is on the learners' level)</p>	<p>The classroom was well-organized and reflected an excellent effective teaching and learning environment.</p> <p>A simple form of the English language was used by the teacher to explain the work as well as when she addressed the learners in a gentle and respectful manner.</p> <p>The classroom felt warm, colorful and safe.</p> <p>The teacher had a plenary to the lesson where she checked for understanding of the concepts taught for the lesson. She presented the work of learners within different ability groups.</p>
<p>6 Management</p> <p>(teacher uses time wisely; attends to course interaction; demonstrates leadership ability; maintains discipline and control; maintains effective teaching and learning)</p>	<p>The teacher demonstrated effective classroom management skills.</p> <p>Little inappropriate behavior from learners.</p> <p>The participant maintained control of the classroom through non-confrontational interaction between herself and the learners.</p> <p>The teacher rewarded the learners for good behavior with classjodo points (online reward system).</p>

<p>7 Sensitivity (teacher exhibits sensitivity to learners' personal, cultural and linguistic differences, responds appropriately in a non-threatening way; pro-active learning environment)</p>	<p>The teacher showed great respect and embraced learners' diversity, language, culture and special needs. She was dressed in a professional manner as required by the school. She was dressed in a black abaya. This was an extremely pro-active learning environment.</p>
<p>8 Assistance to learners (teacher attends to diverse learners' needs, differentiation; makes use of different teaching strategies; plans for diverse learners' needs based on linguistic abilities and levels)</p>	<p>The teacher checked learners' activities and positive feedback were given to the learners. She constantly move around the classroom to check the progress of learners' work. The teacher attended well to weaker learners to provide them with support and the attention that they needed. The teacher used a lot of Arabic words and phrases to assist learners with limited English vocabulary or understanding.</p>

Strengths observed:

All of the learners were actively involved throughout the lesson.

Learners are clear as to what the participant expects from them.

A great amount of effort are diverted to differentiated teaching.

Activities given to learners are based on their linguistic abilities.

Overall impression of teaching effectiveness:

The teacher was actively involved with all the learners in the classroom.

She encouraged and motivated learners to communicate and give answer or ask questions in the target language.

The teacher attended to each learners' needs either individually or within their group.

APPENDIX E

Letter of Approval from REC at SU



NOTICE OF APPROVAL

REC: Social, Behavioural and Education Research (SBER) - Initial Application Form

10 July 2019

Project number: 10316

Project Title: Identities, ideologies and practices of English Language teachers in one school in the United Arab Emirates: An ethnographic study

Dear Ms Jody Marthmus

Your REC: Social, Behavioural and Education Research (SBER) - Initial Application Form submitted on 20 May 2019 was reviewed and approved by the REC: Humanities.

Please note the following for your approved submission:

Ethics approval period:

Protocol approval date (Humanities)	Protocol expiration date (Humanities)
10 July 2019	9 July 2022

GENERAL COMMENTS:

Please take note of the General Investigator Responsibilities attached to this letter. You may commence with your research after complying fully with these guidelines.

If the researcher deviates in any way from the proposal approved by the REC: Humanities, the researcher must notify the REC of these changes.

Please use your SU project number (10316) on any documents or correspondence with the REC concerning your project.

Please note that the REC has the prerogative and authority to ask further questions, seek additional information, require further modifications, or monitor the conduct of your research and the consent process.

FOR CONTINUATION OF PROJECTS AFTER REC APPROVAL PERIOD

Please note that a progress report should be submitted to the Research Ethics Committee: Humanities before the approval period has expired if a continuation of ethics approval is required. The Committee will then consider the continuation of the project for a further year (if necessary)

Included Documents:

Document Type	File Name	Date	Version
Research Protocol/Proposal	14180588 Jody Hendricks research proposal FINAL FINAL 15 May 2019	15/05/2019	Final proposal
Data collection tool	14180588 Jody Hendricks semi-structured interview questions FINAL 14 May 2019	15/05/2019	Final
Proof of permission	ADEC PublicPermissionLetter for research	15/05/2019	Final
Data collection tool	Jody 14180588 Classroom observation check list	17/05/2019	Final
Informed Consent Form	SU HUMANITIES Consent form Jody 14180588	17/05/2019	Final

If you have any questions or need further help, please contact the REC office at cgraham@sun.ac.za.

Sincerely,

Clarissa Graham

REC Coordinator: Research Ethics Committee: Human Research (Humanities)

*National Health Research Ethics Committee (NHREC) registration number: REC-050411-032.
The Research Ethics Committee: Humanities complies with the SA National Health Act No.61 2003 as it pertains to health research. In addition, this committee abides by the ethical norms and principles for research established by the Declaration of Helsinki (2013) and the Department of Health Guidelines for Ethical Research: Principles Structures and Processes (2nd Ed.) 2015. Annually a number of projects may be selected randomly for an external audit.*

Investigator Responsibilities

Protection of Human Research Participants

Some of the general responsibilities investigators have when conducting research involving human participants are listed below:

1. Conducting the Research. You are responsible for making sure that the research is conducted according to the REC approved research protocol. You are also responsible for the actions of all your co-investigators and research staff involved with this research. You must also ensure that the research is conducted within the standards of your field of research.

2. Participant Enrollment. You may not recruit or enroll participants prior to the REC approval date or after the expiration date of REC approval. All recruitment materials for any form of media must be approved by the REC prior to their use.

3. Informed Consent. You are responsible for obtaining and documenting effective informed consent using **only** the REC-approved consent documents/process, and for ensuring that no human participants are involved in research prior to obtaining their informed consent. Please give all participants copies of the signed informed consent documents. Keep the originals in your secured research files for at least five (5) years.

4. Continuing Review. The REC must review and approve all REC-approved research proposals at intervals appropriate to the degree of risk but not less than once per year. There is **no grace period**. Prior to the date on which the REC approval of the research expires, it is **your responsibility to submit the progress report in a timely fashion to ensure a lapse in REC approval does not occur**. If REC approval of your research lapses, you must stop new participant enrollment, and contact the REC office immediately.

5. Amendments and Changes. If you wish to amend or change any aspect of your research (such as research design, interventions or procedures, participant population, informed consent document, instruments, surveys or recruiting material), you must submit the amendment to the REC for review using the current Amendment Form. You **may not initiate** any amendments or changes to your research without first obtaining written REC review and approval. The **only exception** is when it is necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to participants and the REC should be immediately informed of this necessity.

6. Adverse or Unanticipated Events. Any serious adverse events, participant complaints, and all unanticipated problems that involve risks to participants or others, as well as any research related injuries, occurring at this institution or at other performance sites must be reported to Malene Fouche within **five (5) days** of discovery of the incident. You must also report any instances of serious or continuing problems, or non-compliance with the REC's requirements for protecting human research participants. The only exception to this policy is that the death of a research participant must be reported in accordance with the Stellenbosch University Research Ethics Committee Standard Operating Procedures. All reportable events should be submitted to the REC using the Serious Adverse Event Report Form.

7. Research Record Keeping. You must keep the following research related records, at a minimum, in a secure location for a minimum of five years: the REC approved research proposal and all amendments; all informed consent documents; recruiting materials; continuing review reports; adverse or unanticipated events; and all correspondence from the REC

8. Provision of Counselling or emergency support. When a dedicated counsellor or psychologist provides support to a participant without prior REC review and approval, to the extent permitted by law, such activities will not be recognised as research nor the data used in support of research. Such cases should be indicated in the progress report or final report.

9. Final reports. When you have completed (no further participant enrollment, interactions or interventions) or stopped work on your research, you must submit a Final Report to the REC.

10. On-Site Evaluations, Inspections, or Audits. If you are notified that your research will be reviewed or audited by the sponsor or any other external agency or any internal group, you must inform the REC immediately of the impending audit/evaluation.